THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way" — however dimly, and
lost among the host — as does the evening star
to those who tread their path in darkness.

— *The Voice of the Silence*

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MANU SUBEDAR

Gandhism As I Understand It

[We reprint from THE ARYAN PATH, March 1939, this lucid presentation of some fundamental aspects of Gandhiji's teaching by Shri Manu Subedar, B.A., B.SC. ECON. (London), Barrister-at-Law, translator of the *Jñāneśwarī*, which Madame Blavatsky described as the "King of mystic works." Though written over thirty years ago, it remains valuable. As the original Editorial Note said:

"Particularly we should like to stress our esteemed contributor's idea about 'the mental thraldom' of young India of today, and in that connection H. P. Blavatsky's major part in initiating in the eighties of the last century the popular revulsion among Indians against the systematic misprision of the nation's cultural heritage should not be overlooked. Had it not been for her work, 'everything good in India' would have come much nearer to being destroyed before Gandhiji began his mission."—ED.]

"THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE of a man's life is to make the acquaintance of his Maker," says Gandhiji. While this is more or less the teaching of every religion, the excellence of Gandhism arises from the fact that this acquaintance is to be sought not by any standard and ceremonial worship, nor by any outward forms of obeisance. There is no injunction of intense individual prayer or of community prayer. Everybody is left to observe whatever forms of faith he feels like observing. Respect for religion, tolerance for the followers of every faith, and intense appreciation of the good in others are the keynote.

The principal path of reaching God, according to Gandhism, is the service of man. The Mahatma himself has eschewed all worldly possessions (through a vow of *Aparigraha*). He is living not the life of pomp and circumstance, but the simple existence of the simple folk who are economically downtrodden. This becomes a perpetual reminder to a man that every other human being is in every respect the same as himself.

Starting with this innate feeling, not merely of equality but of oneness, it is impossible not to be impelled powerfully to strive to raise the status of all who for any reason have not secured a fair deal. The fact that the attention of the Mahatma was directed to the plight of the Harijans demonstrates how he has hit upon the proper Eastern counterpart of the Western notions of a minimum standard of living, and how he has, at various times and at great risk to himself, fought for this end. The Mahatma then directed his attention to the agricultural masses who, again, through the relentless forces of greed and exploitation at the hands of both foreigners and Indians, have been reduced to a pitiable condition. Much of their occupation in handicraft is gone. Their economic self-sufficiency is no more. They are carrying an oppressive burden of land revenue, rent, and interest, making it impossible for them to have the motive for improving agriculture, even if they had the resources.

The general doctrine of truth and non-violence in its simplest phase, as applied to the everyday conduct of a human being towards other human beings, implies straightforward dealing, free from malice and hatred. Non-violence of this character requires enormous courage — courage to overcome internal impulses of greed and anger and courage often to go counter to the established code of social manners and the established prejudices and traditions of the privileged classes in every society; but, in effect, the equality of men and the fundamental unity of human life are emphasized. A desire for scrupulous justice, accompanied by the effort to love even a wrongdoer, is imposed on the disciple of this faith. It is not easy to separate the man from the wrong which he is doing, particularly when one occupies a place of authority and has to deal with questions of discipline. To obtain the trust and the friendship of an enemy seems almost a contradiction in terms, but a finer nature can reach these heights. Pretence or cheating of any kind has no place in this philosophy. It is not merely an impression created in the mind of the other man, a matter of deep faith for oneself, that, while trying to remove injustice aimed at oneself and others, one still desires the highest welfare of his enemy. Enmity then is not towards persons, but towards evil tendencies in them.

If God is truth, the search for God must involve the highest individual preparation for finding truth. It is only when physical grossness is eschewed and mental balance is secured that truth will dawn. The elimination of selfishness and the assiduous suppression of selfish ends is the beginning of the realization of the highest truth, viz., that the individual self of man is, under many limitations, *Paramatman* — the Soul of all things — the Highest. If one were to seek for this true happiness through

doing good to others, the question of greed would generally get subordinated, until it became extinct. Petty purposes cease to worry the seeker, but lifelong habits, tradition, the consequences of surroundings and of company, can be overcome only after prolonged effort and a general feeling, not merely of the worthlessness of material possessions, but of the impermanent satisfaction obtainable from worldly conditions.

In the centre of the teachings of Gandhiji, stands the doctrine of the knowledge of self. No-one can serve others, unless he has disciplined himself and developed certain qualities. Soul force, which is greater than all other forces, can arise only from the realization that a man's true existence is with reference to his soul and not with reference to the world, in which he has a name and a body and of which he is a unit. In its social bearing, the qualities of soul which a man must cultivate are humility and the desire rather to give to others than to take away anything from anybody. The Mahatma has written frequently on the qualities of the *Satyagrahi,* i.e., the man whose exclusive concern is the pursuit of truth. The highest amongst these qualities is the absence of hatred and intolerance.

The Law of Karma has many variations and designations in other schools of thought. It is accepted also as a postulate in Gandhism. The circumstances and the surroundings in which one is born and in which one grows, the success or otherwise which one meets with, the physical and mental powers or weaknesses of a man, the coincidence by which he attracts or repels others — all depend on some inexorable spiritual law. But every man can, within certain limits, in this very life mould even these externals. They cease to be of serious importance as soon as the light of the soul dawns in one. From a multiplicity of desires, a stage is reached where a man's desires become concentrated, and the more selfless he becomes, the more he seeks harmony with his surroundings and yearns for success only in one direction, viz., the service of others. The resentment of those who have recoiled from a religion consisting of ceremonials — the outside shell from which the kernel is gone — at the effort of Mahatma Gandhi to bring religion to bear on problems of individual conduct, as well as on major issues of the social, economic, and political life of the country, can be understood.

The root difficulty with every individual is that his mind is constantly working from one set of desires, ambitions, or attractions, to another. Through this arises weakness. Once a man has been touched with the desire to know himself, there will be an increasing number of occasions when he will turn away from the world and look within himself, but he will be unable to sustain himself on these heights. It will not be a normal or a continuous process, as it is with those who have stabilized their mind

and intelligence and planted them firmly in the heart. Deep faith is wanted, accompanied by a feeling of renunciation in order to secure this constancy and this balance. These facts are common to Gandhism and to all other sets of doctrines. But the Mahatma, by example and precept, by emphasis on the value of a vow, by eschewing pomp and circumstance, by the reduction of wants and the adoption of the simple life, by self-imposed poverty, by fixing on himself responsibility for the suffering of others, and in a thousand small but very effective ways, has given his followers a simple code to enable them to fix their minds on human service and the search for truth as the royal road to better acquaintance with the Spirit within.

Earnest men and women in the West, puzzled by the conditions of their civilization, are beginning to realize that something is lacking. They are seeking for the Light. Hearing a little about the doctrines of Gandhiji, they want to learn more. But who is going to preach these doctrines and to get them accepted in practice in Europe, is a question which the practical Western mind would immediately ask. The answer is, let a few men, who believe and who have faith, begin to live this life and the rest will follow. And those few men are arising.

While the West is beginning to weigh the import of these doctrines, in India their acceptance is confined to a very limited circle of the followers of the Mahatma and, even amongst these, few live up to them. In India, there is the glamour of the West, the hankering after modernization. Extreme competition, impoverishment, and very slow progress towards freedom, assisted by the results of Westernization in Japan, Turkey, and Afghanistan, have led young Indians to seek guidance from the West. Western thinkers, brilliant in the first steps, but generally failing to reach the final solution, attract them. The degeneration created by the British rule has led the young folk to search outside, where they are torn between the doctrines of Fascism and of Communism. These men with half-digested knowledge are still not ready to absorb the fundamentals on which Indian polity could be based and, indeed, the whole world polity could rest. The mental thraldom imposed by foreign education and the studied devaluation of everything Eastern would have destroyed everything good in India but for the surge of nationalism and the mass awakening resulting from the doctrines of the Mahatma. Courage even unto death in the cause of truth had been heard of before, but has been demonstrated in India only recently. The results produced have made young persons falter. They are turning back and giving an eye to the political doctrines of Gandhiji. What they cannot yet adapt themselves to is that part of his teaching which enjoins personal discipline, absti-

nence, and simplicity. The political truth regarding the freedom of India appeals to them, but its counterpart and its inner essential — the removal from their own natures of violence, of hatred, of intolerance, and, above all, of selfishness — has not yet caught them.

The reaction of the Western mind to any criticism of machines, complex financial organizations, specialized services, experts, parliaments, and empires is hostile, but without understanding. The highest moral doctrine is that everybody must work. The aim of every social organization should be to secure for everyone the opportunity to work. The extent to which machines and the trade created by them, penetrating into the remotest parts of the world, have destroyed human labour and the scope and opportunity for human work is terrible. One must learn, however, not to hate the machines, but to love humanity. Promptly the cynic will ask, What is to be done with the machines already invented? As a device for saving human effort, use may be made of them as of all natural and physical advantages. No-one has suggested that, when fresh water is available, distilled water must be created from the sea for everyday use. That the machines have dominated not only the men who were working but the men who produced and who owned the machines and made them forget their obligations towards other human beings is written large in the industrial history of every Western country. This result could not have been produced if the leadership of society had been in the hands of men with awakened souls, i.e., with a feeling of identity with other human beings and with a feeling of responsibility for their welfare. That these qualities can be cultivated has been demonstrated. That they could be instilled into an ever-increasing number of human beings is also credible. If, under the name of patriotism, violent hatreds leading to the senseless slaughter of innocent persons during war can be created by propaganda and corporate effort, why should not the same propaganda and corporate effort give as much assistance in the production of good as they have given hitherto in the production of evil?

Anti-war theses have given glamorous statistics of the prosperity which could have been brought to every man, woman, and child in Europe, if the expenditure on armaments and on the last war had been avoided over a stretch of years. An Indian under the influence of Gandhism would point out not the material but the other results — viz., the elimination or the substantial reduction of crime, of disease, of frustration, and of the humiliation of vast masses, and generally the establishment of human responsibility — from the organization of society on the basis of non-violence. In such an organization the primary self-directive impulses known to the average human being in the West would have received a

serious check from other desires strongly stimulated, aiming not at taking something from others, but at giving one's best to others, leading to a balance between what is contributed by an individual to the general life and what is taken from that general life by the individual. The life of the spirit should not be a superior pose or an occasional nicety to be indulged in as a hobby. It must in all cases be a corrective and a balancing factor to physical life. But it must be more the foundation on which the rest of existence depends. Restraints arising out of family discipline or the discipline of society through laws are known and understood, but Gandhiji's teachings seek to evaluate, in the interest of the human race, the restraints which can be imposed on himself by a man who has begun the search for the spiritual life.

When you visit the West, they show you with great pride roads, buildings, communications, palaces or town halls, museums and libraries. As proofs of achievement and civilization, these are put forward. The follower of Gandhiji would say, in all humility, that it is better for a country to show a fully developed human being, who leads the life of the Soul, than to show all these. From one torch, many lamps could be lighted. The value of human civilization must be put in the ascendancy of the moral motive — not merely as expressed in words, but as it is lived. Where are the physical monuments of civilizations prior to that which is known to us now in the West? There is something greater than those achievements, and it is the purpose of the Mahatma's teaching not only to bring this out, but to extol it as the highest aim of human life. Once that aim is accepted, applications to social and political organization and economic and physical production and distribution would inevitably follow.

MANU SUBEDAR

Gandhi Exhibition

The centenary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi has been marked in Britain by numerous lectures, meetings, exhibitions, and other special events including the issue of commemorative postage stamps. Among the most interesting and historically most comprehensive exhibitions was that presented by the British Museum, in the stately long room of the King's Library, during September and October 1969. The exhibition, staged under the title "Mahatma Gandhi: A Hundred Years," used a well-chosen range of exhibits to illustrate three themes: Gandhi's personal life; the movement for Indian Independence; and the activities of Gandhi as writer and as political and social thinker.

A photographic display covered many aspects of the Mahatma's life, from schooldays to life in South Africa and many-sided political involvement. The visual reminiscences of Gandhi's famous visit to the Lancashire cotton mills during the Second Round Table Conference in 1931 proved particularly fascinating. Newspaper cuttings, letters, and photographs brought that remarkable event, so typical of Gandhi's universal compassion, vividly to life. Portraiture of Gandhi was illustrated by Claire Winsten's series of pencil sketches, and oils by the same artist, and by G. Amshewitz and C. Subbakrishna. Among other works of art was a memorable statuette of the Mahatma dressed in a dhoti and with a walking stick, a figure made in bronze-finished fibreglass. Gandhi's spinning, a symbolic as well as economic activity, was brought to life by a display of photographs of traditional spinning and weaving and a book-type *charkha* spinning wheel as designed by Gandhi. Numerous letters to private correspondents and political contacts alike were on show, some written from Yeravda Central Prison, Poona, and bearing an IB stamp.

The selection of Gandhian literature properly reflected his stature and enormously wide talents and sympathies. Few of the British know that some of Gandhi's major works were first written in Gujarati, his mother tongue: a number were on display, along with English translations. The life of Gandhi has inspired a wide range of works of appreciation and historical interpretation; the number grows yearly. A representative selection was on show, along with works by European figures, including Ruskin and Tolstoy, known to have made an Occidental contribution to the making of the Mahatma's mind.

Similarly the *Rama-Charita-Manasa* of Tulsi Das and the *Bhagavad-Gītā,* important among Oriental works that influenced him, were displayed in the form of illuminated manuscripts drawn from the British Museum's regular collection in the Department of Oriental Printed Books and Manuscripts. Particularly fascinating to the English visitors were the religious-style pictures and small coloured posters depicting Gandhi and his associates, their ideals and opponents, in a striking manner. Such were among the manifestations of the Independence Campaign that reached the hearts of the tradition-conscious Indian people. Copies of the Congress Bulletin and pamphlets gave further reminders of the turbulent times in which the saintly Mahatma crusaded non-violently.

The exhibition was not vast in size but was certainly comprehensive in its selection and of consistently high quality. It formed an altogether worthy tribute by the British Museum to one of the greatest figures yet produced by the human race.

BRIAN G. COOPER

JOAN N. BURNETT

The Promethean Act

[Mrs. Joan N. Burnett brings to the discussion of contemporary problems a perspective enlightened by a study of literature, history, and, especially, Theosophy and mysticism. The present article has some valuable things to say about the relation between man and nature.—ED.]

PROMETHEUS stole fire from the gods and brought it to earth for man. This, at first, seems a meritorious act. Surely it is not for humanity to use its benefactor's name in any derogatory sense. Shelley, in his great poem, *Prometheus Unbound,* sees him as man's helper against a tyrant-deity, who took revenge by having Prometheus nailed to a rock in the Caucasus and sending a vulture to prey daily on his vitals.

Before Shelley, there was Aeschylus. Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* was the first play in a trilogy and in it he so depicts Prometheus "as the personification of the spirit ready to suffer for the good he has done" that inevitably "our sympathies and even our ethical judgements are mainly with him against Zeus." But the writer quoted[1] then suggests that in the third play, *Prometheus Delivered,* which was lost, it seems likely that Aeschylus provided a reconciliation between Zeus and Prometheus, since "the conflict depicted was between two right causes, the betterment of humanity and the necessity of order."

How to evaluate these two right causes? Is not that the great problem of our day, one that concerns — no, not simply "the whole world." From 20 July 1969 it concerns the entire cosmos. Two days previously, with the astronauts still halfway from their target, "far-sighted" businessmen were already discussing the possibility of bringing down the vast quantities of valuable metals scientists believe to be on the moon, and the B.B.C., London, quoted their eager question — "How would this affect investments?"

From Prometheus to the Stock Exchange seems rather a dizzy drop, but it is an apt, even a frightful, example of the predominant view in this century of what constitutes "the betterment of humanity." To how many of the three thousand pressmen at the rocket-launch at Cape Kennedy, or of the millions glued spellbound to their television screen or radio set, did "the necessity of order" being preserved throughout the cosmos come home with equal force?

Let us keep to earth, though, and not be sidetracked by the moon-shot. It was for the earth-dwellers that Prometheus braved the gods. A

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[1] C. M. BOWRA: *Ancient Greek Literature* (Thornton Butterworth Ltd.)

different interpretation of what he did for them than either the Greek dramatist's or the English poet's is found in a sentence of M. Jacques Albert-Cuttat's, his wise and valuable little book, *The Spiritual Dialogue of East and West*,[2] which many readers of THE ARYAN PATH may know already.

> If [he says] the conquest of nature is divorced from its spiritual finality, and becomes an end instead of a means to glorify God by conforming the world to God's creative call ... then the human domination of things becomes Promethean, i.e., ungodly and therefore inhuman.

For "God" we may use our own thought-term, whatever signifies to us that great Causative Principle of which we and the universe we live in are the outward manifestation, which sustains all, being the One Reality throughout, which is the source of cosmic law. Even the most hard-headed young technocrat brooding over the latest gadgets in his laboratory must confirm that such law exists. Only through knowledge and observance of it did Appollo 11 itself come into being and achieve its end successfully.

Then why the stupidity, the evil, arrogant stupidity, of flouting it elsewhere? Can so perfect a system be broken at any one point without disaster following? That disaster does follow we know all too well; the proofs are everywhere around us. Vegetation destroyed by insecticides (which the insects themselves can now withstand!); birds and fish killed in millions by oil or chemical discharge; soil made barren, climates altered, by indiscriminate tree-felling; rivers polluted with factory waste, as the atmosphere with fumes — not to mention radio-active dust: the list is endless, and all these penalties, please note, are but the outward and immediate ones. What the inner and long-term ones will be, who can say? If in proportion to the crime, appalling, surely. For the crime is against *the unity of life.*

Can these be classed as Promethean acts? If we adopt M. Albert-Cuttat's use of the term, yes. They are "human domination of things" for no creative end, but for material profit only. For this, and for this alone, man is exploiting both his innocent fellow creatures and his living environment, nature, in which, above all, "the necessity of order" is vital to him if he is to continue to inhabit this planet earth in health and comfort.

Every one of the above abuses could be shown to have dire effects on health, which has to be maintained nowadays by commercialized drugs, anti-depression pills, and tranquillizers, twenty million doctor's prescrip-

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[2] Max Müller Bhavan Publications, New Delhi.

tions for the last two being issued in Britain in one year. Against the conquest of space put such defeat in simply *living*! And remember that it may be a Promethean act to disallow "the necessity of order" to one's body. According to the Ancient Wisdom a human birth is none too easily obtained; it is the crown of long upward striving and the body entered into is the vehicle for further progress. As such it calls for respect and care. Similar treatment to that which is lavished upon a spacecraft!

Order reigns naturally in a healthy body, every part functioning harmoniously with every other. More, it is a body suited — some would say allotted — to the indwelling ego. Theosophy teaches that the cells that compose it were brought together by no mere chance; they bear the imprint of former lives and have to be "redeemed," if need be, and their evolution furthered by the ego. So all, from within outwards, are closely related each to each; there is a deep foundational interdependence and unity. This is proved in some degree by the need to match blood-group with blood-group before giving a transfusion, though of course the "alchemy" that blends the cells with the psyche goes far beyond physical chemistry. Transfusion is a most dubious innovation and, when it is forced on sick persons "for their good" against their known wishes, should certainly count as a Promethean act, a violation of the inner "order" which the dweller in that body deems "necessity," preferring death if need be.

But now come the far more frightful transplants of organs, with all the gruesome possibilities opened up to us recently of medical and legal uncertainty as to when a donor is actually dead. "Donor," by the way, is a sickly euphemism. Donors have been rushed from their death-beds through the city traffic to hospital and laid on the operating-table still breathing but quite impotent voluntarily to donate. Of course one cannot pronounce on this for all. To some the prolongation of bodily life, their own or another's, will seem justifiable, even praiseworthy, by any means. They will demand only a perfecting of technique. Doctors themselves are divided on the subject. But the fact remains: means exist and are in use for disrupting the basic elements that make up a human being, by introducing strange blood, a strange heart, even — the latest repulsive aim — strange sex organs, with what ultimate effect on that wretched being no man knows, since all this is as yet in its early stages.

Nor do these experiments stop short with the physical envelope. Drugs can be used without the recipient's knowledge. Some paralyse or totally alter their brain functions. Some produce sterility. Some destroy their moral judgement. All this power, once the prerogative of "Zeus," rests now in the hands of those modern Titans, the scientists, and in so far

as it subserves only *earthly* man and promotes his material good solely (and through the torture of millions of helpless animals at that), it must be called a Promethean act.

Let us not be deceived by talk of "the betterment of humanity." Granted, science *has* done much in certain ways for that. But one suspects, nay, one knows, for they avow it, that another motive is gaining fast upon our technocrats — unholy curiosity. Witness the Cambridge professor who recently deprived twelve chaffinches of their hearing and said openly that his reason was curiosity as to how they would behave when deaf, and that only! Twelve of the sweetest little songsters in the bird-world! He was "criticized" (!) for it but the matter petered out. And there again we see the shameful attitude to nature, once the *Magna Mater* approached with reverence and humility, now outraged, exploited, her creatures abused, her pure waters and skies defiled. "Holy earth," says Hesiod, writing of the birth of Zeus in Crete, "took him in her arms. Holy earth hid him." In sharp contrast spoke Sir Bernard Lovell of Jodrell Bank Observatory, exulting in the triumphant flight to the moon. "Man is about to free himself from the constraints of earth. We have lived these millions of years in a dark cell."

Surely the darkness is rather in the type of mind that can so see the lovely globe we live on — Keats's "Fair world ... fair paradise of Nature's light" — and spurn it so scornfully, whatever wonders may lie ahead among its sister planets. And the danger is that that darkness may deepen, even as in the days of Atlantis, when men "degraded spiritual things and turned mighty powers over nature to base uses,"[3] unless a strong effort is made to counter it by those who have a better wisdom than our glib, assertive technocrats.

In his play *The Persians* Aeschylus shows the proud ruler, Xerxes, not only trying to conquer his neighbours by force of arms but also trying "to bend nature to his will more than it is right for mortal man to do," by throwing a bridge across the Hellespont. This may seem a small thing to us nowadays, far from ranking as a Promethean act, but to a true Greek like Aeschylus it was *Hubris,* which meant any kind of frowardness and excess, and after *Hubris* came, inevitably, *Nemesis,* a lesson the Greeks never failed to stress.

> When men or societies went too far, either in dominating other men and societies, or in exploiting the resources of nature to their own advantage, this overweening exhibition of pride had to be paid for. In a word, *Hubris* invited *Nemesis* ... Today our technological idolaters seem to imagine

[3] WILLIAM Q. JUDGE: *Echoes from the Orient* (Theosophy Company, India)

that they can have all the advantages of an immensely elaborate industrial civilization without having to pay for them.

So wrote Aldous Huxley a good many years ago. But *Vedanta for the Western World* may not please the "idolaters" as a textbook.

To say that the West wholly lacks reverence is to make ourselves laughable: only weak fools, sentimentalists, claim reverence for anything, be it art or sex or country peace or old age or the soil or the animal world or what is wrongfully called "mere" matter! Matter may be accounted low in the scale of creation, but a perceptive eye will see it for what it is, "the most remote effect of the emanative energy of the Deity."[4] As for the cry of sentimentalism, so popular with cheap critics as an easy form of dismissal of whatever runs counter to their own cocksure opinions, the dictionary defines "sentimental" as "tinctured with sentiment," and what is sentiment but one of man's best attributes, feeling? We need far more of it as a counter to soulless efficiency. Feeling is sympathy, compassion, *ahiṁsā,* concern for all that lives. It should mark our attitude to the cosmos itself.

One last view of the Promethean act, always remembering that we have used this phrase in a special sense throughout, seeing it as a breaking-in upon the lawful order of things simply for man's material benefit. It is, in essence, disruption. (Perhaps the H-bomb is a grimly apt symbol of it.) It is "man's dominion," as the poet Burns saw, breaking "nature's social union." But the same act has, in fact, broken man himself, disrupting the harmony between the human and divine elements in him, and unless the spirit in him triumphs and effects reintegration he will find no lasting good, either through a new heart in his failing body, or a new vision of "reality" derived from some hallucinatory drug, or through all the copper and uranium that may lie awaiting him on the moon.

There are few better analysts of and guides to the slow process of reintegration than the late Hugh I'Anson Fausset, that Western mystic who lived and wrote by the clear light of Eastern wisdom. He writes, in one of his finest, most intuitive books, *Fruits of Silence*:[5]

> The law which on every level maintains the order and structure of the universe, cannot be disregarded. For it embodies the principle by which creation is made effective. Yoga teaches that to transgress this order, this *dharma* inherent in the heart of man as in the universe at large, and by which, as he becomes individually conscious, he can distinguish between right and wrong action, is to disturb the balance of the cosmos and to invite chaos to come again. It is also, by the ineluctable

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[4] H. P. Blavatsky

[5] Abelard-Schumann, Ltd., 1965

law of *Karma,* of cause and effect, to incur a debt against life which will have to be paid, and not only by the individual transgressor, before the balance can be restored ...

Few today recognize as their essential vocation the bending of their human faculties to the task of infusing spiritual meaning into the physical world from which their bodies are sprung. Yet this is our distinctive role in the creative drama in which we play, here on earth, a central part. And even when we perform that role perversely, exploiting or manipulating the powers of nature for our own delusive advantage, we only prove how impossible it is to escape our responsibility. For there is no power in life but spirit and to possess it consciously endows man with as awesome a capacity for unlimited destruction as for divine creation.

Scientific knowledge alone, he adds, will never restore to us our "inherent sense of oneness with the Cosmos." Only

when the mind consents to be the intelligence within the heart is it no longer the enemy of the real. And the ideas which are generated within a heart so enlightened are spiritual forces which descend into the sick body of life, charged with the radiations of a higher wisdom and a creative love.

In that last sentence we find the true solution of the conflict between the "two right causes" underlying the Promethean act. For in fact they are not two, but one. The necessity of order and the betterment of humanity are indivisible. Only — the concept of that betterment must be spiritual.

JOAN N. BURNETT

Participation

"Participation" Plato taught us to call it:
The invisible consummated within the visible.
What escapes the hand the soul discerns.
It is the world's warp; on it our life is woven.
It is nature's law and in it all nature's enchantment lies.
Many voices saying Plato erred
Are naught beside its quiet eloquence and strength.
They are the night voices; they do not know the philosophic sun
Of the Greek day Plato saw and hymned.

MARY CARMAN ROSE

MEYRICK H. CARRÉ

The Final System

[Mr. Meyrick H. Carré was for many years on the staff of the University of Bristol. He is the author of *Phases of Thought in England* and of other books and articles on the history of ideas. We are glad to welcome him to our pages with this thoughtful, sober, and scholarly summary of how at various periods science has thought it had produced a final system and how on each occasion a further advance proved possible which demanded revision of the system. He provides an accurately documented illustration of the Theosophical insight that all knowledge based on physical observation and inductive methods is subject to uncertainty and change. The intellect is precious but no system it produces is final.—ED.]

AT PERIODS in the history of Western thought men have confidently declared that the general form of natural knowledge prevailing in their day was the final system. The embracing frame of conceptions that directed their understanding of the physical processes of the world was assumed at these moments without question; and because it was taken to be inviolable it was believed to be necessary, self-evident, and permanent. Important differences of theory might arise in sections of the field of natural inquiry, in the territories of light or magnetism or astronomy, for example, but there was no disagreement over the fundamental axioms of knowledge; for to question them was to question the unchanging principles of reason. During the long dominion of the physical doctrines of Aristotle over the mind of Europe, from the twelfth century to the latter years of the sixteenth century, the finality and completeness of his theories were frequently asserted and his authority was proclaimed over all departments of natural enquiry. Let us cite instances from the earlier and from the later moments of his reign. In the twelfth century the great Arabian philosopher Averroes, who was known as the Commentator on Aristotle, uttered praises of his master that appear extravagant to modern ears.

> Aristotle's doctrine [he wrote] is the highest truth because his was the summit of human intelligence. It is therefore well said that he was created and given us by divine providence that we might know whatever can be known.[1]

And in another passage he allowed himself to declare that Aristotle had been devised in order to demonstrate supreme human perfection. Other scholastic authorities followed Averroes in maintaining the supremacy and irrefragible character of Aristotle's physics. Now move forward

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[1] AVERROES: Quoted in *Medieval Thought* by GORDON LEFF (Penguin Books, 1958), p. 157. Mr. Leff is Reader in Medieval Philosophy, Oxford.

some five hundred years to the early years of the seventeenth century, a time when the master's theories were being shaken to their foundations. Let us look into a textbook that was industriously used by the students of Oxford and Cambridge throughout the period, Crackanthorpe's *Logic*. The treatise *De Praedicabilibus* was published in 1622 and we find in it complete fidelity to the ancient conceptions and a firm trust in their finality. In flowery Latin the writer pronounces that such was the skill and judgement of Aristotle in the discovery of truth that no error can be imputed to him in any part of the field of logic nor in the philosophical sciences, metaphysics, physics, and ethics, save in a few trifling points. He pays eloquent homage to the sun of philosophy before whom other thinkers withdraw into the darkness like tiny stars. Here and in other passages of his *Logic* it is plain that he thinks that Aristotle has said the last word in natural philosophy as well as in other provinces of thought, and he dismisses recent developments in astronomy that cast doubts upon the classical account as trifling. In its broad features the enquiry was closed.[2]

When Crackanthorpe was holding fast to the finality of the Aristotelian picture of the world the scientific revolution was under way. In England, until the closing years of the seventeenth century, the new sciences of nature were directed by the ideals of Bacon; the founders of the Royal Society claimed the Society as a Baconian institution. The new sciences were experimental, utilitarian, and progressive; their concern with improvements in navigation, trades, and commerce repudiated assertions of finality, and not only was the idea of science practical and progressive but the basic theories of mechanism were also fluid. The ruling conceptions of science that men learnt from Galileo, Descartes, and Boyle widely differed. At the opening of the following century the fundamental synthesis of Newton resolved these issues. The world system was no longer open to rival speculations; it was in general known. The *Principia* offered the means for a complete explanation of nature and accordingly it encouraged a system of thought that grew to be as immutable as the world-view of Aristotle had been in earlier ages.

Many expressions of the final nature of the Newtonian physics can be found in the eighteenth century. The conviction was fortified by religion. Theologians, moralists, and poets declared that Newton had disclosed the structure and working of the divine creation. Derham in his *Astro-Theology,* 1715, asserted that the ultimate machinery of Providence

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[2] CRACKANTHORPE: Quoted in translation from his *Logicae libri quinque de Praedicabilibus* (Fourth ed., Oxford, 1677), *lib.* v., *cap.* 16, from a course of lectures that I gave at the University of Bristol in 1957.

had now been revealed. The poet hymned the man,

> Whose piercing mental eye diffusive saw
> The finished university of things
> In all its order, magnitude and parts.[3]

In France, the greatest writer of the age, Voltaire, devoted himself to popular explanations of the doctrine of Newton in the course of which he maintained that Newton's system of universal attraction could never be superseded. An authority at the Lisbon Academy announced that Newton had proved all that it was possible to prove in natural philosophy.

These were rhetorical utterances. The opinions of the leading men of science in the eighteenth century are more to the purpose. The leading men of science were French, d'Alembert, Lagrange, Laplace. At their hands was formulated the general determinism that became an article in the creed of classical science, and the principle held out the possibility of a final account of natural events. Indeed d'Alembert in his *Elements of Philosophy,* 1759, observed that "the true system of the world has been recognized, developed and perfected." He went even further. He declared that the laws of equilibrium and motion upon which the whole system rested possessed necessary truth, for neither matter nor motion could exist apart from them.

There is one notable publication in the eighteenth century that provides a profound case for the necessity and permanence of Newtonian physics. It is Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason,* which first appeared in 1781. In this famous work Kant argued that the notion of space assumed in the doctrines of Newton is a necessary presupposition of our knowledge, and he proceeded further to show that certain principles used in physics, such as the principle that every change has a cause, are those required to make coherent experience possible. Kant's list of these *a priori* principles displays, especially when it is compared with recent ideas in mathematics and physics, his dependence on Newtonian science.

It was, however, in the nineteenth century that the approaching end of physics was most confidently proclaimed. While applications of mechanistic theories multiplied and comprehensive generalizations, such as the atomic theory and the law of the conservation of energy, gave unity to science over many fields, faith in the abiding character of the governing conceptions was strengthened and the prospect of completing in principle the task of physics appeared imminent. Instances of this judgement may be found among leading men of science in widely different centres of learning and at scattered moments throughout the century. Helm-

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[3] JAMES THOMSON: "To the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton," 1727

holtz, one of the authors of the law of conservation of energy, wrote in his celebrated pamphlet, *The Conservation of Force,* published in 1874:

> ... we discover the problem of physical science to be to refer natural phenomena back to unchangeable attractive and repulsive forces whose intensity depends wholly upon distance. The solubility of this problem is the condition of the complete comprehensibility of nature.[4]

And he proceeded to point out

> that physical science will come to an end when the reduction to simple forces is complete and it has been proved that this is the only reduction of which the phenomena are capable.

The vast success of Newtonian mechanics led some prominent scientists to contend that a complete knowledge of the laws of physics was approaching.

The prophets who descried the nearing completion of physics were not disturbed by the researches of Oersted, Faraday, and Clerk Maxwell. The work of these men made a breach in the fort of mechanism; yet before the end of the century authorities were once more predicting the end of physics. Marcelin Berthelot, the renowned historian of chemistry, is reported to have remarked in 1887 that from that time there was no mystery left in the universe; and a few years later a master of contemporary physics, Gabriel Lippman, advised a promising student to take up some other line of research, since the subject of physics was exhausted.[5] Testimony to the persistence of the belief is given in the recollections of the philosopher, A. N. Whitehead. Speaking of his youthful circle he recalled:

> ... we supposed that nearly everything of importance about physics was known. Yes, there were a few obscure spots, strange anomalies having to do with radiation which physicists expected clearing up by 1900.[6]

Professor Capek in his book on the philosophy of contemporary physics assures us that examples of this position could be multiplied indefinitely; and in his well-known work *The Laws of Nature,* Professor Peierls remarks that it was a common tendency of textbooks written about the beginning of this century to present physics as essentially a closed subject, without any reference to unsolved problems.[7]

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[4] HELMHOLTZ: The quotation is taken from *The Evolution of Physics* by A. EINSTEIN and L. INFELD (Cambridge, 1938), p. 58. A more accurate reference is HELMHOLTZ: *Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen* (Leipzig, 1880), p. 16.

[5] The references to Berthelot and to Lippmann are taken from ROSALIND HEYWOOD's article on "Changing Mental Climates" in *Science and E.S.P.*, ed. by J. R. SMYTHIES (London, 1967), p. 49

[6] *Dialogues of Whitehead* (New American Library, 1960), p. 12

[7] PEIERLS: *Laws of Nature* (London, 1955), p. 273

Finally, I will mention the teaching of a great authority on the postulates of science, Emile Meyerson. His celebrated book, *Identity and Reality,* appeared in 1907. In it he argued in terms that recall the philosophy of Kant that the principles of mechanism arise from the fundamental nature of the human mind; they are immutable. "It is permissible therefore, to state," he wrote, "that science really tends toward the reduction of all phenomena to a universal mechanism." The principles of causality and of the identity of things in time are metaphysical ideas that must be assumed wherever there is scientific enquiry and they inevitably give rise to mechanical theories. "Only the foundation of mechanism, the explanation of phenomena by motion, is and will be really eternal."[8] And motion is conceived in a classical sense. When Meyerson wrote, the immovable principles were already shaken and recent developments in physics have once more exhibited, as they did in the seventeenth century, the temerity of asserting the permanence of directing ideas and the approaching finality of theory.

MEYRICK H. CARRE

Only

Only by unknowing can I ever learn,
Only by going back can I go forward.
Only by letting go can I hold fast,
Only by descending can I climb.
Only by plumbing the depths can I reach the heights,
Only by being silent can I say all.
Only by looking within can I see without,
Only by dying to self can I truly live,
Only by loving can I ever find God.

HARRY R. DAVENPORT

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[8] MEYERSON: *Identity and Reality* (English translation, 1930), p. 4

ALUN LLEWELLYN

Man and Mind: Space

[Mr. Alun Llewellyn is well known to our readers. In this brief essay he writes lucidly of the historic framework of human thinking about space. His writing combines a philosophical attitude with a very well-informed appreciation of the scientific basis of early thought.—ED.]

SINCE HIS first emergence as a creature of organized thought, Man has judged himself in accordance with the judgement he has been able to make of the Universe beyond him. Belief in a power of Creation which was intelligent and purposeful has enabled him to trust his own intelligence and apply it purposefully to his own present and future. Persuaded that the Universe was an accident in physics destined to meaningless extinction, he has from time to time given way to philosophies of despair and withdrawal, of escapism and refuge in illusion, of disbelief in himself and rejection of his own intelligence. The present age in the West sees him largely given to these persuasions and yet, at the same time, energetically pitting his mind against the mysteries of space.

For this he is still, as he was in the beginning, physically equipped only with an apparatus of judgement limited to a three-dimensional world. The "six directions" of Plato (up and down, back and forth, side to side) still shape the Universe for him from his personal standpoint of observation. Relativity has broadened that concept into the addition of a fourth dimension, time; for Man, while he takes stock of his "six directions," lives through time together with all he observes; and the Universe of the Relativists extends Plato's six lines of calculation, therefore, into the elongated "saddle" shape which is no more than an attempt to project them simultaneously through time. But the ultimate definition of time itself has had to return to what Aristotle found for it in his *Metaphysics*: it is motion that gives us that illusion of time — or to Leonardo's poetic metaphor: When you put your hand into a stream, you touch the last of what has gone and the first of what is to come. And it is the idea of the Universe as motion in many variant aspects of rhythm which gives the key to several of its problems.

It is Light which (so far) is recognized as having the greatest frequency of rhythm, or speed; beyond that frequency, the cycle of rhythm appears to fall back upon, or introvert, itself. Light, therefore, may not only be the operable line of Man's intelligence, as Plotinus postulated, but be the framework of the Universe containing Man, its definition and its limit. The immediate point, however, is that Light contains various rhythms within itself, those evident to the human eye being represented

by the spectrum, the lesser speed of red mounting to the greater speed of violet to be detected by instruments of wider range than the eye can have.

But motion, which dominates time, is itself relative. The spiral forms of various galaxies reveal two major and totally contrasting systems. In the Ring nebula in Lyra, it is the red which is revealed as forming the outer circumference, the violet possessing the centre. In the Black Eye galaxy, violet bands the outer ring, and red is at the internal, focal point. The difference seems to be that between (to use homely parallels) the gramophone record and the run of tap-water into a wash-basin. The tensile cohesion of the record dictates that a point on its circumference must move on a parallel course with a point at its centre; it must march abreast with it while covering a considerably greater cycle in space and complete its orbit within the same period of time, and must therefore move at a vastly greater speed. That a body loosely resting on the surface of the record will travel outward and be flung from it by centrifugal force, by the gathering rapidity from centre to circumference, is a well-known phenomenon. In terms of the spectrum, it must move into the range of the violet at the perimeter from the central and soberer rhythm of red. Conversely, the speed of the flow of water into the basin is dictated by the pressure from the tap, which remains constant. But as it moves from the side of the basin towards the exit-plug it is funnelled downwards through a narrowing circumference, contracting from the rim to the outflow. The rate of flow is the same but the motion is compressed into a shorter cycle and the illusion of greater rapidity is therefore created. To a bubble approaching the exit-hole, the speed of a bubble on the upper rim of the vortex must appear much slower, its own travel from side to side of the basin relatively quicker, unless, as might be possible, it had no idea of its own movement any more than we are aware of our own rotation on Earth's surface. But the conclusion that movement on the perimeter is slower is due solely to the fact that the flow of water has greater laxity than the corporate structure of the record. What may then in fact distinguish the Black Eye galaxy from the Ring nebula is that in one there is a compaction between its parts which the vortex in the other has either not yet reached or has abandoned.

It is this contrast between the loose vortex and the compact disc, or sphere, which seems fundamentally to explain the universe and its several distinct parts. When astro-physicists examine the outer galaxies and detect their retreat into the red section of the spectrum, the conclusion is that they are rapidly withdrawing from our observation, getting further away; that the universe is therefore expanding, dispersed from an originating "big bang" or explosion. The corollary that the position must

be reversed, that all such objects must fall back into their original common centre, the Universe in its present form be destroyed to await re-creation from another cosmic eruption, seems inevitable. If, however, the Universe is a tremendous vortex within something inapprehendable, impelled by a steady flow but formed into a funnel-like whorl, the "shift to the red" of the outer galaxies would have another explanation. If it is correct that a "barrier" surrounds the Universe which instruments have already reached but cannot penetrate, this would also be explicable by the theory of the vortex. Relativity is based firmly on the assumption that the Universe is bounded by "re-entrant form," by the fact that all shapes of energy are confined within its circuit; and a whorl of sufficient impetus to form the Universe within it would impose precisely that restriction on everything it contained.

There is nothing in the idea to preclude the formation of inner whorls inside a major vortex, much as they form in the eddy of a river; and the curious cone-like formations, such as Monoceros, which telescopes observe, black, impenetrable to light, suggest the possibility that other universes have formed within our own and similarly trap and recoil all forms of energy, of light and time-motion, inside themselves.

Within what extent of space beyond space our Universe revolves and what constitutes it, within what immense tide the vortex we know as our Universe is formed, no-one can imagine. It is of curious interest to note that the first philosophies, which have descended to us in mythopoeic shape, all conceived of a Creation, flowing like a stream, which coiled into the circle of the night and therein wombed the stars, the planets, ocean, land, life, and Man's mind by the same inward concentration of energy. The serpent-like spiral of Creation, so imagined, was most probably drawn from the broad circling of the constellations about the Pole Star, dipping and returning with the tilt of Earth between the tropics, and, through the Phaestos Disc and similar designs in Bronze-Age Europe, seems to have survived long enough for Plato to note the theory of a cone-like shape for the Universe as persisting even in his own day. But it illustrates the ability of the human mind to prefigure its own later discoveries as to the nature of the Cosmos.

But now, as it appears, we are forced to accept the same principle of involution as explaining both matter and mind. Gravity itself now seems to be the effect of a centripetal force implicit in the compaction of the basic constituents of matter, atoms and molecules, into stars and planets. And the deflection of light detected by Einstein seems due to its being caught into localized vortices which have assumed that shape. What the most recent research tends to suggest is that, so far from the seeds of

life being born directly from a planet after its settlement and being extinguished with it, they are already present in the inter-stellar reaches and are implicit in the compaction "matter" attains as a nodular point in space. This is due to the discovery of carboniferous gases between the stars; yet, if the fundament of "matter" is in fact the hydrogen atom, it is perhaps significant that "matter" is built from the hydrogen atom stripped of its electronic shield, or outer orbit of rhythm, and that it can be so stripped by the action of light.

Light, therefore, may not only be the author of the area of the bounded Universe, its frequency-rhythm being contained or repelled by some stronger force that compels it to travel in a restricted cycle, but also the author of what we call "matter." Research into the composition of the atom has revealed the same system of confined rhythm. The sub-atomic "particles," so named only for convenience, are variant forms of pattern in motion — of what and through what is again as yet insoluble. Similarly, the processes of thought can be charted and recorded; but the cellular structure of the brain is now realized to be only the instrument for an activity as indefinable as the sub-atomic co-relationships. Mind and matter, as de Chardin has already postulated, have no longer the totally opposed characters once assumed for them but are differing degrees of frequency with the same unapprehendable origin. But no philosophy has been able to depart from the intimacy of light with Man's intelligence. It is through the eye that men make contact with what exists independently of them and their immediate physical sensations; it is through the storage of vision that they can recall the past and project the future. If the development of this faculty can create delusions, it can also create reality from what was only imaginable. The eye is an imperfect instrument, even its immediate physical perceptions are registered on the retina upside down and have to be readjusted by the mind on the instruction of the experience of other senses. Light itself is, for the recesses of space, as slow as sound-travel through the atmosphere. The explosion of a Nova, or star in cataclysm, may have occurred 500 B.C. but could not affect human knowledge by being physically observed until A.D. 500. If philosophy has had to decide from this the proposition that events have already taken place and that we must travel towards a predetermined future, it has also had to realize that the human mind must abandon its conception of such divisions of time, judged from a purely Earth-born standard, in favour of a judgement that can see both the explosion of the Nova at the point of its occurrence and an Earth which the travel of light has not yet attained — a judgement that looks beyond Relativity to an Eternity outside the Universe.

This has been an instinctive aim in human thought since thought itself was first recorded and expressed with greater or less clarity in the study known variously as science, philosophy, religion; the aim to extend Man's understanding beyond the animal immediacy of sensation to an intelligence beyond the limitations imposed on him by the sensations of time and space. The break from the barrier created by his own invention of time-computation around Earth into the novel conditions of the Solar System as a whole is something Man is on the eve of achieving. But this is only a tentative first step. His physical presence on the Moon's surface is necessary chiefly as confirmation of that of which the instruments he has made to extend his powers of cognition already inform him. They have touched, we are told, the limits of his stellar Universe within which he exists. He has first to explore the several levels of motion, and therefore of time, which dwell in its particular area, including those which inside the atom send time backward on its course. But there is, beyond the Universe, an unimaginable territory in which space and time are transcended and yet from which his own mortality is descended, as part of common Creation. His Thought may prove to be a thing the power of Creation has made more powerful than light. As the vehicle of Thought, he has to prove his adequacy.

ALUN LLEWELLYN

Dedication

This is the work that I must glorify.
There is no hope, no passion in my heart,
No thought, no skill, no consecrated part
Of my true self that does not urge the cry,
"The toil must shape the dream." If hope should fly,
Or failure stare on me with eyes of pain,
A voice thrills in me with a proud refrain;
"The task is yours, let not your purpose die."

This inward voice I dare not disobey
Lest, when Time closes round my life's design,
And smites the urge to work and learn and see,
An ill-wrought task should rise up in my way,
My purpose, planted by some thought divine,
My spirit's dream — unfructified by me.

STELLA MEAD

PRATAP CHANDRA

The Alleged Silence of the Buddha

[We print below the second and concluding part of Shri Pratap Chandra's careful examination of the "silence" passages in Buddhist scripture.—ED.]

II

THE QUESTIONS concerning body-soul relationship have obvious moral implications which the Buddha realized only too well, as is borne out by his frequent and vehement attacks on the *ucchedavādins* ("annihilationists"). That he could keep mum on such an issue out of his supposed disregard for metaphysics is patently absurd. In any case, the *Pāyāsi-Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* affords us a good insight into the typical Buddhist stand on this subject.[12] Chieftain Pāyāsi did not admit of a soul (*jīva*) separate from and independent of the body, and consequently denied the principle of *karma*. Kumāra Kassapa, a prominent disciple, is shown in this *Sutta* using a remarkable number of arguments, some of them quite animistic, to establish a separate existence of soul. Arguing that soul survives body's death, and even moves about when the body is asleep, is clearly tantamount to a negative answer to the question, Is the soul the same as the body? And significantly enough, it was preserved in the first collection!

It is easiest to see why the last four questions could not be answered, without implying any aversion from metaphysics. These questions concern a state which can by no means be the subject of ordinary knowledge. *Nibbāna,* as is well-established now, has nothing to do with death, being the state following the eradication of the *āsavas,* "cankers." One who has attained it is considered liberated while alive. The unanswered questions involve the post-mortem destiny of such a liberated person. With the winning of freedom from fetters, the causal chain (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) comes to a stop, and "individuality" in its ordinary worldly sense should then be considered rooted out. However, the Buddha is emphatic that *Nibbāna* is a positive state.[13] A person who is himself not an *arahant* is never likely to understand this riddle. In the words of Edward Conze,

> Nirvana is "unthinkable," or "inconceivable," if only because there is nothing general about it, and everyone must experience it personally for himself; because there is nothing in the world even remotely like it ...[14]

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[12] *Dīgha-Nikāya, ed. cit.,* Vol. II, Sutta 23, esp. p. 333

[13] *Verses of Uplift, ed. cit.,* pp. 97-98

[14] *Buddhist Thought in India,* London, 1962, p. 57

Can it reasonably be said that the Buddha could keep silent on such a vital religious issue merely out of practical considerations?

These last four questions, it can easily be noticed, are based on a confusion of phenomenal and noumenal terms. Replying to them would amount to succumbing to them. The proper attitude on this question was shown by Puṇṇa Mantāniputta, who compared the progress on the path of liberation to a relay of seven chariots.[15] The questioners were like those who want to know, and presume to understand, what comes at the end of the journey without themselves entering even on the first leg of it. However, calling *Nibbāna* Unconditioned is also characterizing it in some way which must have been perfectly understood by the disciples, who left their all for this Unconditioned.

Thus, in short, it appears difficult to substantiate the widely prevalent view that the Buddha consistently shunned metaphysics and cosmology. Added to this is another interesting feature which seems to have escaped notice. There is not a single occasion when silence was maintained in the face of a question from a disciple of some standing. In fact, Māluṅkyaputta, a novice, seems to be the only Buddhist who received this treatment.[16] The remaining questioners like Vacchagotta (most persistent of all), Uttiya, Jāliya, Poṭṭhapāda, etc., are all outsiders. That the Buddha kept silent out of his consideration for the moral uplift of those who were *not* on the right path according to him is inconceivable. This fact should be borne in mind while discussing the situation. The air of mystery shrouding it hardly seems justified. The reason for silence was clearly something different.

The solution of the riddle should be sought, and can be found, only in the literature of the Buddhists themselves. Instances where explanations were offered for this out-of-the-ordinary behaviour are not wanting in the Pali Canon and other works.

It may sound somewhat anachronistic, but there is clear evidence proving that the early Buddhists realized the importance of language and terminology. They believed that one not fully conversant with the frame of reference of a particular doctrine is likely to misunderstand it. For this reason only outsiders or novices are depicted again and again asking questions which assumed what the Buddha specifically denied. The Buddha was reported to have taught according to the capacity of the hearer. Wherever he found a want of such capacity, he preferred to leave the question unanswered rather than confound an already confused man.

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[15] *Majjhima-Nikāya, ed. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 148 ff

[16] *Ibid.*, Sutta 63

Thus, when Vacchagotta inquired about the existence of self and left dissatisfied on being rebuffed with a silence, the Buddha thus explained to Ānanda:

> Again, Ānanda, when asked by the Wanderer: "Is there a self?" had I replied that there is, would my reply be in accordance with the knowledge that all things are impermanent?" "Surely not, Lord." "Again, Ānanda, when asked by Vaccaagotta the Wanderer: "Is there not a self?" had I replied that there is not, it would have been more bewilderment for the bewildered Vacchagotta. For he would have said, "Formerly, indeed, I had a self, but now I have not any more."[17]

In other words, in a sense different from that Vacchagotta had in mind, the self was both existent and non-existent. The Buddha was concerned not so much with the Wanderer's question as with his capacity to understand the answer. If he refused to oblige his interlocutor, it was not because he could not, but because he was quite sure that he would be misunderstood.

At another place, Vacchagotta's lack of training to understand the Buddha's words is clearly given as the reason for silence:

> Profound, O Vaccha, is this doctrine, recondite, and difficult of comprehension, good, excellent, and not to be reached by mere reasoning, subtile, and intelligible only to the wise, *and it is a hard doctrine for you to learn who belong to another faith,* to another persuasion, to another discipline and sit at the feet of another teacher.[18]

The point of view underlying a question was also relevant. Ānanda thus explained to Uttiya why the Buddha would not reply to his questions, whether the whole world would escape through the path shown by the Buddha, or half of it, or one third part of it:

> So as to that question of yours which you put to the Exalted One, you asked it from a different point of view (*aññena-pariyāyena*). That is why the Exalted One did not explain the matter to you.[19]

Two later works similarly emphasize the interrogator's intellectual equipment. In the *Milinda-pañho,* Nāgasena thus explains the Buddha's silence:

> And which is the problem which can be put to one side? It is such as this, "Is the universe everlasting?" ... "Does a *Tathāgata* [a liberated person] neither exist nor not exist after death?" Now it is to such a question, one that ought to be put on one side that the Blessed One gave no reply to Māluṅkyaputta. And why ought such a question to be put on

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[17] *The Book of Kindred Sayings, ed. cit.,* Vol. IV, p. 282

[18] *Majjhima-Nikāya, ed. cit* , Vol. I, p. 487; WARREN'S translation, p. 126

[19] *The Book of Gradual Sayings, op. cit.,* Vol. V, p. 134.

one side? Because there is no reason or object for answering it. That is why it should be put on one side. For the Blessed Buddhas lift not up their voice without a reason or without an object.[20]

Thus, while there can be no doubt that the Buddha had some practical considerations in mind in refusing answers to these questions, they are not what most scholars think. Firstly, it is significant that Nāgasena chose only the questions put forward by a young Buddhist novice, rather than of rival teachers like Vacchagotta. The Buddha could have a reason for dissuading a Buddhist from wasting time, but not an outsider. Secondly, the Buddha is not here interpreted as refusing answers because of his anti-metaphysical stand, but because of his not saying anything without purpose. His purpose, as we have seen, was to encourage his disciples to develop insight rather than resort to idle speculation.

Vasubandhu's discussion with a Vātsiputrīya on this subject as recorded in the *Abhidharma Kosa* is by far one of the most meaningful commentaries from the present point of view. The Vātsiputrīya closely questions the celebrated philosopher about the Buddha's silence on various questions relating to body-soul relationship, the beginning and end of the world, and the future state of a liberated person. The one common feature of all the replies given by Vasubandhu is his unrelenting insistence on the fact that the Buddha always took into consideration the questioner's intention, his state of mind, and his capacity to learn.[21]

To sum up our discussion: there are two notable points about the Buddha's silence. (1) There is considerable variety in the nature of questions to which the Buddha refused to reply. (2) What are questions in some passages are heretical views actually held by some recluses in others. On closer inspection, we find that the Buddha in fact had no aversion towards metaphysical or cosmological questions. Some of the unanswered questions too have been answered by implication at other places. Added to this is the fact that most of the interlocutors were not disciples of the Buddha. All these considerations show that silence was the characteristic reply to outsiders who were not acquainted with the Buddha's method of philosophizing, and who therefore could not understand the correct import of his words. The Buddha was not opposed to inquiries about the world, but he did discourage idle speculation, as this comes in the way of progress.

PRATAP CHANDRA

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[20] *The Questions of King Milinda* (Trs. of *Milinda-pañho by* RHYS DAVIDS, T.W) (Sacred Books of the East, Vol. xxxv, Oxford. 1890), p. 206

[21] TH. STCHERBATSKY'S translation, quoted in MURTI, T. R. V.: *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London, 1955), pp. 42-43

K. SESHADRI

The Mystical Tradition and Contemporary Society

[Professor K. Seshadri has retired after many years as Professor of Philosophy at the University of Madras. In this brief article he brings out that mysticism properly understood is both a definite mode of knowledge and a transforming experience. He shows that it is not world-denying but has a definite social value.—ED.]

MYSTICISM implies a withdrawal into oneself. It suggests a state of absorption. It is *yoga* in the fundamental sense, a movement towards a "centre," tending to a union or mergence. The "centre" is said to be in a transcendental region, a realm beyond the senses and common understanding, but paradoxically enough experienced deep within one's own being. It is at once the universal, cosmic "centre" and the inmost soul that animates and sustains every individual. Indeed, it is the essential identity of the two that is revealed in the rarest and deepest moments of mystical experience, and the mystic strives to "sense" the centre of Being and Reality by a plunge within the fathomless depths of his own consciousness. In such a state of total self-immersion he loses awareness of body and environment, and acquiring a delicate sensitivity to the subtlest intimations of the spirit, awakens to Truth, in a new dimension. "The Ground of God and the Ground of the soul are one and the same," says Eckhart. "*Tat-tvam-asi*," declares the Upaniṣad. That presents in a nutshell the metaphysical basis of mysticism.

On such foundations rise the practical teachings of the Upaniṣads, processed through the stages of *Śravaṇa, manana,* and *nididhyāsana.* The first two are preparatory, and the essentially mystical state is attained in *dhyāna.* The preparatory stages are not always in evidence in the lives of the mystics, recorded in tradition or history; for these appear straightway to have emerged in *dhyāna* without any formal disciplinary preparation, experiencing a vision of the Ultimate and the Supreme from the very early stages.

In *dhyāna* and through *dhyāna* is one vouchsafed a vision of truth. This is described as *darśana.* The substance of all mysticism is in *darśana.* "*Ātmā vā aré draṣṭavyaḥ.*" The mystic's vision is the result of an inward illumination, and the mystic lives, moves, and has his being primarily in an inner world, which he witnesses as containing the source and support of all manifestation in the outer world of common, human affairs. He has his locus within, but the light of his inward wisdom projects itself on the panorama of spatial vistas and on the procession of temporal histories, revealing their inadequacies and their imperfections. The world around

wears a new aspect, and all things are afire with a perpetual effort at self-transcendence. The mystic's vision is no less an inspiration than a revelation.

The wisdom of the mystic not only reveals truth but inspires activity as well. Activity inspired and guided by a self-authenticated awareness of truth links the outer world with the inner. The dominant need of a dynamic world has been described as "integration of wisdom and activity." Mysticism provides the key to this integration. If *Karma* is action, *Karma-yoga,* which is the mystic way, is, as Swāmi Prabhavānanda would put it, "union with God through action." Absorption in enlightened action would reveal "inaction in action," for it is "non-attached action," where the ego with its vainglorious professions and claims has ceased to function. Such action, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* teaches, does not bind, but serves precisely the opposite purpose of liberating the individual. It is not, however, this aspect of the matter which is so relevant in the present context as the fact that the enlightened absorption of the mystic in action is for his part "liberated" action, rather than "liberating" action. "Liberated" action is not only free but inspired action, reflecting a superior purpose unfolding itself. It is the action of the *Mukta,* not merely the action *for Mukti.* But it does show the way of liberation, both by preparing the ground for others who would play their part in the spirit of true wisdom, and by the mystic's own personal example, which is superb in the perfect mystic.

The quest of the mystic is doubly rewarding, as "light" and as "leading." It is both a receiving and a giving. "The soul's two activities of reception and donation must be held in balance," says Evelyn Underhill. The receiving is from an inexhaustible source, and the giving is restricted only by the limitations of time and circumstance and of those that have to work under the limitations. The mystic's activity is an activity of love. He draws inwards from "Transcendental Love," and directs it as Grace through empirical channels for creative activity, functioning as an instrument for the highest of human purposes.

The mystic practises what he teaches. Indeed, his practice is his teaching. He teaches by silence, and by activity in silence. His living presence is itself an education, an inspiration. Mysticism is knowledge, science, *vidyā*. Consider, for instance, the *dahara-vidyā* of the Upaniṣad, which speaks of a *dahara-ākāśa* in the central region of the psychic heart, and commends meditation on it, and all that it contains or represents, as a method of release and realization. The science of mysticism is an experimental science, whose results are open to verification in the light of one's own personal experience. "Oh, come and taste," is the call of the mystic.

And that is the test and the testimony. Obviously, it is no tall claim; for it has been substantiated and confirmed by a long succesion of mystics through the ages, both in the East and in the West.

The West has regarded it as "the art and science of contemplation," one which would reveal the basic interconnection of God, Nature, and Man. It is contemplation supplemented and confirmed by action. As art, it is concerned with activity; as science, with knowledge and wisdom. The insight into the interconnection of God, Nature, and Man implies the essential unity of Being, except for which all mysticism would be meaningless.

The "moments of insight" of the mystic are more veridical than any perception, conception, or reflection that might precede or follow it. Hence mystical experience carries its own truth — dispels doubt and obviates all necessity for denial or rejection. It may seem that mysticism has no method. This is totally wrong. The method of the mystic is inspired by Grace and implemented in love. Yet, method is not all. Mere method would defeat its own purpose, particularly in matters spiritual. It would be appropriate to recall in this context Whitehead's warning: "Some of the major disasters of mankind have been produced by the narrowness of men with a good methodology."

The mystic is intensely active even from where he is, wherever he may be. Established in Truth, absorbed in the reality and bliss of Being, he is at the very source of all life and existence. He works at the source, but his influence reaches out to the farthest limits of the world. He has freed his consciousness from the power of the senses and the limitations of the understanding, and made it subserve the superior interests of the spirit. He has thus dynamized his consciousness, and transformed it into a self-generating power with its source in the ultimate reality, the plenum of pure *Sat,* comprehending both *Cit* and *Ānanda,* but not identical with, or exhausted by, either. The mystic takes himself to the original source of all being, and draws on it for all his requirements.

Mystical insight is insight into the very heart of things. How then can mysticism be anything but directly and intimately relevant to life? Aldous Huxley would say, "a totally unmystical world would be a world totally blind and insane." "There is an ultimate social value in the most secret responses of the soul to Grace," says Evelyn Underhill. "We have to keep the home-fires burning," she adds, referring to the necessity for an inward dynamism, "because they are the fires which raise the steam that does the work." The return of the contemplative to the world of action, after having replenished his resources at their fountainhead, will undoubtedly transfigure society, as it will have transfigured his own per-

sonality in the solitude of his withdrawal. He does not find the world destroyed, on his return; for as a sharer in a universal life he had never denied it, though he was always aware of its inadequacies. He now finds it ready to be remade in the light of his vision.

What the mystic effects is not merely a transition for himself from one level to another but a transformation within and without. In his quest for Perfection, for Peace and Plenitude, he seeks a two-dimensional change: the transformation of man and a remaking of society. "A perfected human world cannot be created by men who are themselves imperfect," says Shri-Aurobindo. Man grows within, and lives within, and that is how he perfects himself. That is divine living. Such life and growth would naturally secure for itself an appropriate environment. The discovery and perfection of the self of man is thus accompanied by a recreation or refashioning of the world. The effects of the mystic's work and influence may not be straightway seen in the structure of the social order, but they are unmistakably evident in the life of the transformed individual. The transformation starts with, and is centred in, the individual.

Mysticism has been described as a kind of "deconditioning," for it makes the individual shed his narrow attachments and affiliations. Every man belongs to a culture or tradition, speaks a language, and owns an inheritance, subtle in nature and form. Mysticism would strip him of these, in so far as they militate against his withdrawal and absorption in the "centre" of his being. The journey across spiritual frontiers requires that he must "travel light." These are encumbrances, and hinder his inward journey. They are externals, and must drop off sooner to later. It is when he sheds these that the mystic appears an alien to his fellow men and to the established social order; a rebel, a lunatic, and a heretic. But he is none of these, in reality. He is just "uninstitutional," unconventional. That is the very "front and head of his offending." He seems an offender because the rest of us have not adjusted ourselves to his vision, and would at any cost enforce our authority on him.

The concern of the mystic is not only with society as a temporal association of individuals seeking to fulfil the objectives of temporal history, but with the development of a higher, spiritual, trans-historical society, in which awakened souls are knit together as participants for eternity in a sublime, universal order. "A mystical society is without walls," says Racejac, the mystic. Mysticism is both a deepening and a widening of dynamic awareness, reaching out to realms beyond time and history. The mystic brings to bear the fruits of eternity on the processes of time. The *Theologica Germanica* has it that "the created *soul* of man

has also two eyes. The one is the power of seeing into eternity, the other of seeing into time." The mystic uses both these.

Contemporary human society runs the risk of being denuded of its humanness. Mysticism alone can save it; for by touching a chord in the depths of the human heart it would not only remind humanity of its inherent, infinite potentialities, but also show that in the realization of those an adequate and appropriate social order may well serve as a means and a preparation. Mysticism as a movement towards a universal "centre," inspired by love and sustained by a constant inward perception of the essential oneness of humanity, does contain the key to a final integration of races, religions, and cultures.

K. SESHADRI

As the World Narrows

God comes
in individual ways
— to each, the light
commensurate
with his mind's height.

As the world narrows
harassed minds
buckle beneath
the overload of space,
cringe from
the bludgeonings of overrule
— tall vision crushed
into the minuscule.

Only a prescient few
renew themselves
through perpetual self-giving
— living the giving word,
achieve a live accord.

DOROTHY ELLIN FLAX

G. SRIRAMAMURTHY

The Poetry of Shankara

Minor Works

[Shri G. Sriramamurthy has already written for us an interesting study of Śaṅkarācārya's major poem *Saundaryalaharī* (THE ARYAN PATH, September 1968). In this article he examines several of Śaṅkarācārya's minor poetic works. Some of these have acquired an important place in Hindu tradition and retained it for centuries.—ED.]

IT IS SAID that he who travels by air sometimes experiences a sudden jolt and feels a fall, which, however, is unreal. The sense of fall is caused by what is called an "air pocket." The aeroplane touches a lower level but does not come down to the earth. Similar will be the experience of the reader of the rest of Śaṅkara's poetry after going through the high poetic flights of *Saundaryalaharī* and *Śivānandalaharī*. The minor poems of Śaṅkara are far inferior to these two sublime companion poems. But they too can intoxicate us with their metrical melody and metaphysical thought of the highest order. Whatever be their number and variety, whatever be the circumstances that gave birth to them, all these poems bear the mark of the master-mind that conceived and propagated the Vedāntic reality of pure Consciousness which also is Bliss and Beauty. In these poems philosophy is set free of aridity and dialectical drabness. The essence of Advaita is given time and again in stanzas of haunting beauty and flowing rhythms. Pandits, poets, and peasants alike have been chanting these verses for centuries together. India has won the reputation of being a nation of philosophers not because every Indian knows or cares to know philosophy but because of the irresistible charm the songs of Śaṅkara and others of their kind have for the average Hindu mind. Śaṅkara indeed has brought the highest truths of religion and philosophy down to the level of the common man: he made the Indian air hum with Vedānta. W. H. Auden once said:

> To us you are no more a person
> Now, but a whole climate of opinion.

This has been true of Śaṅkara for centuries.

Although the name of Śaṅkara is associated with innumerable poems, long and short, one cannot be definite about their authenticity. It has become a habit with the traditional Hindu mind to attribute any philosophical poem of unknown or doubtful authorship to Śaṅkara. The best thing in these circumstances is to lean upon the consensus of scholarly

opinion. The following poems are Śaṅkara's by common consent. (1) *Bhṛṅgapañcakam* (2) *Ratnapañcakam* (3) *Kaupīnapañcakam* (4) *Dhanyāṣṭakam* (5) *Prātaḥsmaraṇam* (6) *Manīṣāpañcakam* (7) *Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotram* (8) *Kāśīpañcakam* (9) *Hastāmalakastotram* (10) *Daśaślokī* (11) *Vijñānanaukā* (12) *Haristutiḥ* (13) *Aparokṣānubhūtiḥ* (14) *Śataślokī* (15) *Ātma-Bodha* (16) *Mohamudgara.* Of Śaṅkara's supposed poems and lyrics, whose name is legion, these only are of considerable importance and poetic value. Works such as *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* do not concern us here as they belong to the realm of religion and philosophy proper.

Śaṅkara's aim in these poems is to present the great philosophical verities in popular style. He chooses the most basic truths to present for popular appreciation. According to these poems, the world of existence is an illusion. The cycle of birth-and-death is an essential factor of the phenomenal world. The world and life are taken to be real because of the inherent ignorance (*Avidyā*) in us. The individual self and the Supreme Self are one, even though we do not know it. The external world is but a projection of the Self. By knowing the true nature of the Supreme Self, it is possible to destroy ignorance. Yet it is not knowledge that is important. The knowledge of the Supreme Self must be in the form of intuitively felt experience of the individual. When one has attained to this state of a-perceptual, a-conceptual pure knowledge in a flash, one feels the immediacy of the Infinite Reality called *Brahman.* The soul is then liberated, *mukta.* But no words can describe the state of pure consciousness. Rightly does Śaṅkara ask us in the following verse:

Na caikam tadanyaddwitīyamsyāt
na vā kēvalatwam na cākevalatvam
na śūnyam na cāśūnyamadvaitakatvāt
katham sarvavēdāntasiddham bravīmi (*Daśaślokī*)

It cannot even be said that It is One. How then can there be a second, other than That? There is neither absoluteness nor non-absoluteness; neither non-entity nor entity; for It is absolutely non-dual in Its nature. How then can I describe That which is established by all the Vedāntas?

The method of attaining the highest state of consciousness, however, is not systematically presented in these verses. It is occasionally spoken of, as in *Ratnapañcakam.* It is given elsewhere in his writings, most notably in his commentaries on the *Bhagavad-Gītā,* the Upaniṣads, and the *Brahma-Sūtras.* Though the method is not detailed in the minor poems under consideration, one important thing is made abundantly clear. Direct realization is possible only after undergoing rigorous physical and mental disciplines and after obtaining the grace of a competent *Guru,* as can be gathered from the following verse:

Imām muktāvasthām paramaśivasaṁsthām gurukṛpā-
sudhāpāṅgāvāpyam sahajasukhavāpyāmanudinam
muhurmajjanmajjanbhajati sukṛtaiścēnnaravara-
stadā tyāgī yōgī kaviriti vadantīha kavayaḥ.

If a man, after repeated daily baths in the pool of his native bliss reaches, through merit acquired in the past, this condition of the liberated, this rest in the Supreme Śiva, attainable only through the gracious nectar-sweet glances of the Guru, then the wise call him a man of great renunciation, a real yogin and a genuine seer.

It is interesting to observe that Śaṅkara emphasizes devotion as essential for those who seek the Absolute. To him the worship of a deity is not at all incompatible with his teaching of Advaita. As he realizes that all paths lead but to the Absolute, he worships all gods with equal regard and respect. The "Hymn to Hari," a series of forty-four stanzas in praise of Viṣṇu, amply illustrates his unbiased religio-philosophic mind. If in the *Śivānandalaharī* he praises Śiva as the Supreme Self, here he worships Viṣṇu as the Supreme Self capable of liberating one from the *Saṁsāra*. In *Mohamudgara,* again, he asks us to worship Govinda in order to cross the ocean of *Saṁsāra*. Śiva and Viṣṇu are but labels that can be changed at will. But the Eternal Reality for which they stand remains beyond the reach of time, space, and causality. The following is the typical attitude of Śaṅkara:

Brahmā-Viṣṇū Rudrahutāśau ravicandrau
Indrō vāyuryajña itīttham parikalpya
ēkam santam yam bahudhā::hurmatabhedāt
tam saṁsāradhvāntavināśam Harimīḍē (*Haristuti*, verse 18)

Him who is the One Reality, but who, owing to the diversity of intellects, is conventionally spoken of in various ways as Brahman, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Fire, the Sun, the Moon, Indra, Vāyu and the sacrifice — that Hari, the destroyer of the darkness of *saṁsāra*, I praise.

The catholicity of Śaṅkara's mind is revealed most notably in *Manīṣā-pañcakam*. Śaṅkara categorically denies the importance of birth and other distinctions and upholds the unity of life. He chooses a dramatic method of narrative to convey this essential truth. One day Śaṅkara encounters a *cāndāla* and a *Cāndālī* (an untouchable husband and wife) on his way to Kāśī and asks them to stand away from him. The *cāndālā,* who is no other than Śiva in disguise, thereupon asks him pertinently as follows:

Annamayādannamayam hyathavā caitanyamēva caitanyāt
dvijavara dūrīkartum vāñchasi kim brūhi gacchagacchēti (verse 2)

O Worthy Brahmana, please let me know what exactly it is you wish to keep away; is it the physical body from another body, or consciousness from another consciousness?

The question opens the inward eye of Śaṅkara, who instantly replies:

Jagṛtswapnasuṣuptiṣu sphuṭataṙā yā saṁvidujjhṛṁbhate
yā brahmādipipīlikāntatanuṣu protā jagatsākṣiṇī
saivāham na ca dṛśyavastviti dṛḍhaprajñā:sti yasyāpi cet
cāṇḍālo:stu sa tu dwijo:stu gururityēṣā manīṣā mama (verse 4)

That consciousness which shines forth most directly in waking, dream and sleep; that which is the one witness of the universe that threads all the bodies ranging from Brahma's down to an ant's, that I am, and not anything phenomenal — whoever possesses such a firm conviction, I conceive to be my *Guru,* be he a *cāndāla* or a twice-born one.

Though he prays to various gods and goddesses, Śaṅkara believes that pilgrimage is actually unnecessary. What matters really is the realization of the self, not external forms of worship. All the centres of pilgrimage are inside us, as he points out in the following *śloka*:

Kāśīkṣetram śarīram tribhuvanajananī vyapinī jñānagaṅgā
bhaktiśraddhā gayēyam nijagurucaraṇadhyānayōgaḥ prayāgaḥ
viśweśoyam turīyaḥ sakalajanamanassākṣibhūto:ntarātmā
dehe sarvam madīyē yadi vasati punastīrtham anyat kim asti
(*Kāśīpañcakam,* verse 5)

The body is Kāśī, the place of pilgrimage; the Ganges of knowledge is the mother of the three worlds, pervading all; faith combined with devotion, this is Gaya; the Yoga of meditating on the feet of one's spiritual master is Prayaga; the fourth, the Inner Self, the witness of the minds of all men, this is Viśveśvara. If all this is in my own body, where else is any other sacred bathing place?

Śaṅkara is a born teacher. As an expert teacher makes out a few teaching points first of all and then drives them home one by one with the help of examples and illustrations, Śaṅkara too singles out an aspect of Advaita and drives it home by repeating it several times, giving several examples, and employing effective similes. His favourite technique is to repeat a line at the end of each verse. Such a use of a "burden" is not common in Sanskrit before him, although it is found in the Vedas and occasionally in works like the *Rāmāyaṇa.* Śaṅkara seems to have made this technique his own. The following "refrains" may be noted by way of example:

Kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ (*Kaupīnapañcakam*)

Cāndālō:stu sa tu dvijo:stu gururityeṣā manīṣā mama (*Manīṣapañcakam*).

Tasmai śrīgurumūrtaye nama idam śrīdakṣiṇāmūrtaye (*Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotram*).

Sa kāśikāham nijabōdharūpa (*Kāśīpancakam*).

Sa nityōpalabdhisvarūpo:hamātmā (*Hastāmalakastōtram*).
Tadēko viśiṣṭaḥ śivaḥ kēvaloham (*Daśaślokī*).
Tam samsāradhvāntavināśam Harimīḍe (*Haristutiḥ*).
Bhaja Govindam bhaja Govindam Govindam bhaja mūḍhamate (*Mohamudgara*).

Simile and alliteration are his favourite figures. He rarely uses learned figures for the obvious reason that most of these poems are meant for the populace. But when he uses a figure like the pun, it is most striking and effective, as in the following verse:-

Kāśyām hi kāśatē kāśī kāśī sarvaprakāśikā
sā Kāśī viditā yena tēna prāptā hi kāśikā.

Kāśī indeed shines in the real Kāśī (i.e., consciousness). Kāśī is the illuminator of all. By whomsoever that Kāśī is known, by him verily is Kāśī reached.

He is a master of similes. He uses them not merely for decoration and delight. A simile in his hands is a powerful instrument to bring home profound metaphysical truths. Many of the similes are traditional. They are mostly drawn from life around. It is noteworthy that he sometimes piles simile upon simile in order to drive a point home. The glory of the chain of similes can be seen in *Aparokṣānubhūti* (Direct Realization).

This art of elaboration makes things vivid and lucid. But the method of compression too is useful. Śaṅkara is an adept in condensing whole sections of the Upaniṣads into a single *śloka* without clotting the meaning or petrifying the rhythm. The opening stanza of the *Śataślokī* (A Century of Verses) is an example of this method of compression. The Socrates-like catechism and the superb conclusion are a rare delight.

Kim jyōtistava bhānumānahani me rātrau pradīpādikam
syādevam ravidīpadarśanavidhau kim jyōtirākhyāhi mē
cakṣustasya nimīlanādisamaye kim dhīrdhiyodarśane
kim tatrāhamatō bhavān paramakam jyotistadasmi prabho.

Master: "What is your light?" Disciple: "The sun during the day, the lamp and other lights by night." Master: "It may be so. But please tell me what is the light by which you have to see the sun and the lamp." Disciple: "It is the eye." Master: "When you close it or when you are not able to see through other causes?" Disciple: "It is the mind." Master: "And what is the light by which you see the mind itself?" Disciple: "In that case, it is myself." Master: "So then you are the most Supreme Light?" Disciple: "Yes, Master, I am That."

The poem is an admirable summary of a portion of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (iv. 3).

It is really interesting to observe that the greatest intellectual giant of our country is also among the most popular of our poets. His unbelievable command over the most forbidding aspects of philosophy, his unfailing grip over the art of prosody, his uncanny skill in bringing sweet sounding simple words together, his mastery of rhetoric, and his deep insight into human psychology have all been put to use to shape these poems.

G. SRIRAMAMURTHY

"For of the Soul"

For of the soule the bodie forme doth take,
For soule is forme and doth the bodie make.
—EDMUND SPENSER

The soul might be thought of
as the archetypal body.
The soul may also be thought of
as something other than spirit.
(We are concerned with definitions
for the sake of convenience.)
The spirit is the creative principle
which may at the proper occasion
create in form
or create something assuming form.
The spirit may manifest as the form
or in the form which is the soul.
The soul is the determining form.
The body is the determined form,
being more or less
the copied impression of the soul.
Since the body in its present earthly mode
is cast in inferior readily corruptible material
it will be discarded in favour of another body
which will in many ways
be like the body that was
but of finer and more responsive
and more enduring material —
being so much improved, in fact,
that one might speak of it
as the heavenly
or glorified body.

DANIEL SIMPKINS

New Books and Old

Indian Writing in English*

HIS OWN creative experience with English in India was the theme of a brief paper presented to a conference of Commonwealth writers and critics at Leeds by R. K. Narayan in 1964. "I feel, however," he added, "it [English] must reach the market-place and the village green if it has to send down roots." Today we appear to be farther than ever from settling English in this country. In this situation the rise of Indian writing in English looks daring (like levitation, in some quarters) but assured. Meanwhile, for the Indian scholar and critic of English, Indian writing in English seems to offer a reprieve from intellectual insecurity and oblivion. What is his performance like? Has he supported the creative writer's adventure with comprehension and hard-headed judgement? For people (in many countries) with stakes in English writing, this is an important question. The appearance of *Critical Essays* is therefore welcome; for it can be expected to yield specimens of the achievements and outline the trends in the field.

It was a good idea to present these essays on Indian writing in English to Professor Menezes, for he is himself a poet in English. Professor Naik and his team of editors have done a good job in assembling several scholars and critics in one book. There are twenty-four essays, variously described as "papers," "articles," "notes" by the contributors. Three of these — by Professor Narasimhaiah, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao — are reprints. Three are by foreigners, exemplifying outside interest in the field. There is ample breadth: Tagore (surviving his centenary drum-beatings), Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu; Nirad Chaudhuri; the novelists; "Workshop" writers; and subject-wise (a convenient break-up), six essays on poetry, three on drama, nine on fiction, and six on non-fiction. Essays on Professor Menezes as writer, man, administrator, and teacher are admitted towards the end of the book under "Personalia" and have the generally feckless look of a poor relation smuggled into the party.

The young hopes in poetry come in for adequate consideration. Professor Amalendu Bose looks at some minor poets of the Writers Workshop Miscellanies and finds promise in their performance ("One might indeed prefer the valley to the mountain top"). A Workshop writer, David McCutchion, discusses the bold work of Mokashi-Punekar,

> to judge the possibility, implications and probable form of an Indian English of poetry which wilfully denies conventional English poetic norms, and the English associations or nuances of words.

He leads us, rather courteously, to the conclusion that the chances of "Indian" poetry in English are slight; and (expect the worst) the chances of poetry in English being written at all are not bright. Teachers of English in India, following the politics in this country, are apt to join in this premonition. Next, the "Indian" poet, Mokashi-Punekar himself, contributes a lively defence of Sarojini Naidu. His "note" and Professor Iyengar's exposition of the First Canto of Aurobindo's *Savitri* make the essays on poetry in this volume a representative section of the

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* *Critical Essays on Indian Writing in English: Presented to Armando Menezes.* Edited by M. K. NAIK, S. K. DESAI, and G. S. AMUR. (Karnatak University, Dharwar; distributed by Macmillan and Co. Ltd. 408 pp. 1968. Rs. 20.00; 30*s*.; $4.00)

critical experience in this area.

"Indianness" in fiction too is confronted — and again by a foreigner, Mr. T. D. Brunton, who was a visiting lecturer in English at Karnatak University during 1966-7. He samples ("India in Fiction") the work of Raja Rao, Anand, and Narayan. Raja Rao's novels, to Mr. Brunton, are gravely flawed, "largely due to a confused ambition to create an Indian novel." Raja Rao's popularity with our critics is none the less confirmed in this volume by the articles on *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope* by Professor Narasimhaiah and Professor Naik respectively. Mr. Brunton's view that Narayan is not sufficiently committed may not survive a deeper probe; but his judgement of Anand's *Untouchable* as more or less a success is in line with critical consensus in this country. Anand, of course, is a neglected writer, and Meenakshi Mukherjee says so in her competent article ("Beyond the Village") on Anand's trilogy. Smt. Mukherjee argues that unless certain serious weaknesses are lived down, Anand's work will not rise above the documentary level. Another article in the volume gives us Anand himself telling the story of how he came to write *Untouchable*, his best-known novel. Jamesian reminiscing of this kind is rather new in Indian writing in English and Anand's account would gain in effect with some cutting. On the other hand, Raja Rao's "The Writer and the Word" (another reprint), tersely esoteric, would go down better with annotation. The inclusion of Narayan's workman-like paper on English in India[1] would have served as a practical prologue to the whole collection of essays in this volume.

Mr. Brunton's article, however, has at least one virtue: it is a comment on our gushings on "Indian" writers. Perhaps there really is some need to improve our approach to Indian writing in English, to make it more methodical, more realistic, more fruitful. Professor Raghavacharyulu suggests in his "Task Ahead" a new deal for Indian writing in English so that it can "extricate itself from its present polarization between the circumspection of the 'Wogs' and the euphoria of the 'Faddists.' "

The outstanding virtue of *Critical Essays* is thus the attention it focuses on subjects and attitudes so far shunned: Nirad Chaudhuri, for instance, and Professor Kantak's piece of practical criticism ("The Language of Indian Fiction in English"), though practical criticism has its limitations in fiction. And Sujit Mukherjee's valuable suggestion ("Indo-English Literature") to promote English translations of vernacular works will extend and strengthen the Indo-Anglian field. Professor Raghavacharyulu concludes: "The task ahead is at once a challenge and an opportunity for the new generation of critics." More of a challenge, probably; for Indo-Anglian literature is a growing body of writing that ruthlessly tries the Indian critic's *bona fides*. *Critical Essays* in this light marks the end of the beginning, and also a new beginning.

V. PANDURANGA RAO

Studies in Religious Philosophy and Mysticism. By ALEXANDER ALTMANN. (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London. xi+308 pp. 1969. £3)

This volume consists of twelve articles which their learned author has contributed to journals and other collective works during his distinguished career as director of the Institute of Jewish Studies, Manchester, and Professor in Jewish Philosophy at Brandeis University (the post at present held by him). The book is well documented, a very high standard of scholarship is maintained throughout, and readers interested in religious philosophy and

[1] Since gathered in a well-made book edited by John Press and published by Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

mysticism will benefit greatly from a close scrutiny of its pages. But a note of warning ought to be issued: Professor Altmann is no popularizer, and he does not write for the masses, perhaps not even for what is vaguely termed "the general reader" — which is precisely why a high standard of scholarship is evident on every page, and why the volume is worth a serious study.

The contents of the book are easily divided into three distinct groups: one which deals with subjects belonging to the field of Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic philosophy; another which is concerned with Jewish mysticism, and a third which discusses aspects of modern Jewish philosophy. Jewish theology as such is not touched upon by the author, who believes that a distinction ought to be drawn between theology as such and the philosophical and mystical traditions of interpreting religious themes. It is interesting, however, that a similar sharp distinction between philosophy and mysticism is not possible, as may be readily seen especially in the first two sections of this volume, which cover medieval times, when the Islamic, Jewish, and Christian philosophies were deeply influenced by Neoplatonic mysticism (possibly to be traced back to the religious philosophy of Philo of Alexandria). With the three modern thinkers dealt with by Professor Altmann (William Wollaston, Moses Mendelsohn, both eighteenth-century, and Franz Rosenzweig, twentieth-century) a different wind is blowing; and yet, in their individual ways, both Wollaston and Mendelsohn were steeped in the traditions of medieval Enlightenment, whereas Rosenzweig, the existentialist among modern Jewish philosophers, is the only one really different from all the rest.

P. WERNBERG-MÖLLER

Kashmir Shaivism. By J. RUDRAPPA. (Prasaranga, University of Mysore. 187 pp. 1969.)

Kashmir Shaivism is an important system of Indian philosophical thought which, unfortunately, is not as well known as it ought to be. It is unique in many ways, synthesizing as it does notable features of Hindu as well as Buddhist thinking. No mention of it was to be found in histories of Indian philosophy; but Radhakrishnan's History contains a brief section giving the outlines of the system.

The credit for placing Kashmir Shaivism on the intellectual horizon belongs to the eminent scholar, the late Professor J. C. Chatterjee, whose book on the subject was not only the first of its kind, but a little masterpiece in its own way. It was he who started publication of the Kashmir Sanskrit Series and brought out one finely printed volume after another of texts pertaining to Kashmir Shaivism and allied systems of thought.

Another scholar who in recent times has done inestimable service in this direction is Dr. K. C. Pande, whose work on Abhinavagupta is a *tour de force*. His name comes in for casual mention here as the translator of Bhaskara's commentary on Utpala Deva's *Īśvara Pratyaḍhijñā Kārikā*, an authoritative text of this school.

Our learned author, Shri Rudrappa, has himself done pioneer work by bringing out Kannada editions of two important texts, viz., the *Śiva Sūtras* attributed to Vasugupta, and the *Pratyabhijñā Hṛdaya* of Kṣemendra. His Kannada rendering and paraphrase of the philosophic verses of Lallā Yogīśvarī is also a valuable although brief contribution to the understanding of Kashmir doctrines.

The present work is an English rendering and analysis of the matter contained in the previous books. Its 187 pages are divided into as many as thirty-three chapters including the Bibliography. It is neither necessary nor possible to mention in the course of a brief review the tenets of this system.

Its main categories are well brought out in this book, which can serve as an Introduction to the system.

We must close with a few critical remarks. The Publisher's Note by the Director of the "*Prasaranga*" of the University of Mysore compliments the printers for their "neat printing." But the Note itself contains a glaring blunder, as does almost every succeeding page. The transliteration of Sanskrit words is not uniform, and also not in keeping with scholarly conventions. Again, the Note, I have reason to know, is inaccurate on points of fact. We have a right to expect better standards of accuracy and scholarship from University publications.

In his Foreword, Professor Nikam seeks to equate the *Pratyabhijñā* of this system with the Platonic doctrine of "recollection." The identification is altogether too facile, as the concepts as well as the contexts are wholly different.

K. GURU DUTT

Non-Violence and Aggression: A Study of Gandhi's Moral Equivalent of War. By H. J. N. HORSBURGH. (Oxford University Press, London. 207 pp. 1968. Rs. 27.50)

This is a thought-provoking book on a subject which is of special significance during the present Gandhi Centenary Year, when throughout the world there is an effort at assessing the value of Gandhian thought and ideals in relation to the pressing problems of war and peace, violence and non-violence. The principal theme of the book is to enquire whether *satyagraha* or non-violence in combination with truth can be a moral equivalent of war. The author is not an undiscriminating admirer of Gandhian philosophy but examines the problem from different angles and his conclusions are on the whole the appropriate ones.

Mr. Horsburgh poses the issues involved by saying that a moral equivalent to war must fulfil certain conditions. It should be a method of social action clearly distinct from that of armed force; it should not suffer, or should suffer in a lesser degree, from the moral deficiencies of war; it should be possible to use it as an instrument of justice whenever war would normally be resorted to; and it should have some prospect of being effective.

Examining the Gandhian ideology from these different angles, Mr. Horsburgh finds it answers the various criteria favourably. It is quite distinct from war. It does not suffer from the moral deficiencies of war. As regards whether it could be used as an equivalent to war in all situations in which armed force would normally be used, he envisages certain contingencies in which war may appear superior to non-violence, because of the physical victory it brings. But the superiority of non-violence is evident from the fact that

> it brings about a situation in which the victory-defeat dichotomy is forgotten and a generous settlement becomes at least a possibility.

The effectiveness of non-violence depends upon conversion and also to a certain degree on coercion, whereas that of violence depends upon coercion alone. There are reasons also for believing that the effectiveness of the *satyagrahi*'s moral challenges surpasses that of other moral appeals:

> A Gandhian appeal operates at two levels, not only challenging opponents to recognize the justice of a particular cause but also to develop an attachment to *satya* itself, thereby entering into a co-operative enquiry into human needs.

The "success" in the ordinary sense of *satyagraha* is not in all cases the criterion of its superiority over violence. What is more important is the moral challenge to the issues of war that it poses — war, with its massive destructive possibilities especially in the pres-

ent atomic age; *satyagraha* with its appeal to the innate goodness of human nature, which abhors destruction or loss of life and infliction of suffering on vast numbers. Situations can certainly be envisaged in which a helpful or co-operative response cannot be evoked in the opponents and much also depends on the moral calibre of the person or persons who resort to *satyagraha* as a means to secure the abandonment of war or violence.

Allowing for these limitations the moral superiority of a selfless act of suffering undergone to gain the confidence of, or to secure the righting of wrongs by, the opponent (sharply distinguished in the book from "enemy" — a *satyagrahi* has none) is undoubted. There were occasions, for instance, in Gandhiji's own life and practice of *satyagraha* which indicate all these possibilities.

Mr. Horsburgh has made an honest attempt to present all aspects of the problem in an objective manner, and the book should contribute to a much clearer, more precise, and wide-spread understanding of Gandhiji's concept of non-violence and its practical manifestation as *satyagraha*.

C. V. H. RAO

Ethical Religion. By M. K. GANDHI. (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 31 pp. 1968. 50 paise)

In early 1907, when he was in South Africa, Gandhiji published in *Indian Opinion* a summary in Gujarati of the first eight chapters of *Ethical Religion* by William MacIntyre Salter, founder of the Society for Ethical Culture, Chicago. This booklet is an English version of this summary, which is reprinted from *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. VI. The principal argument of the original author is that there are certain ethical principles which are common to all religions. For ethics tells us what the world ought to be and how man should act. A moral act must spring from our own will. That action is moral which is done only for the sake of doing good. For, apart from men's wishes and opinions, there is something like a moral standard, which we may call Moral Law. Well might an ethically-minded person proclaim like Dr. Coit, "I shall have no other God except righteousness." All morality involves social relations. Altruism is true religion. Man's highest duty in life is to save mankind and take his share in bettering its condition. This is true worship — true prayer. *Ethical Religion* is, indeed, a character-evolving publication.

G. M.

For a United India: Speeches of SARDAR PATEL, *1947–1950*. (Publications Division, Government of India, Delhi. 198 pp. Revised and enlarged ed., 1967: received 1968. Rs. 7.50)

Sardar Vallabh-bhai Patel, known as the "iron man," will go down in India's history as the statesman who welded the hundreds of Indian Princely States into the Indian Union with the minimum of friction. This volume of his writings and speeches during 1947–50, arranged under five relevant headings in chronological order, provides a clear index of the practical vision with which he viewed India's problems in the crucial years immediately after independence.

In the first section on Indian States, we have one or two references to the integration of Hyderabad State, indicating how, in a difficult situation, with Lord Mountbatten counselling patience in negotiations with the Nizam over accession on the one side and the Nizam building up hopes of outside intervention to preserve his status on the other, the Sardar uttered a stern warning

which was later followed up at the proper moment by a lightning Police Action:

> The terms and talks which Lord Mountbatten had [with the Nizam] have gone with him [he declared]. Now the settlement with the Nizam will have to be on the lines of other settlements with the States. No help from outside on which he [the Nizam] seems to rest his pathetic hopes would avail him.

The speeches grouped under the heading "Time for Consolidation" seem in many respects relevant to the present day even as they were to the situation immediately after freedom. We seem to face the same problems and to be prescribing the same solutions to them which he did. While Sardar Patel was a strong defender of Partition, which he repeatedly declared inevitable and inescapable, his warnings about fissiparous tendencies and the need for safeguarding the unity and integrity of India are as relevant now as then. Speaking on 15 December 1947, for example, he said:

> Independence has been won but this independence is only in relation to foreign domination. Real *Swaraj* has yet to be achieved — *Swaraj* which will usher in complete success in constructive spheres.

How many of India's leaders have during these twenty-odd years said the same thing on ever so many occasions and how much is real *Swaraj* still a sort of dream now as then!

Some of Sardar Patel's other observations are equally relevant to other situations obtaining today.

> Inciting workers to strike, to go slow, to sit in will damage us greatly (15 January 1950).
>
> Our public life seems to be degenerating into a fen of stagnant waters. Our conscience is troubled with doubts and despair about the possibilities of improvement. We do not seem to be profiting either from history or experience. (15 August 1950)

How true are these and many other observations in 1969, when everywhere strife, discord, violence, and other evils prevail, engulfing what economic and social progress we have made or been trying to make!

Rereading what leaders like Sardar Patel, who gave up their all for the country's freedom and unity, said in the years past will be a profitable exercise — provided, of course, that we are prepared to profit by what they said.

C. V. H. RAO

The Social Reality of Religion. By PETER L. BERGER. (Faber and Faber Ltd., London. viii+231 pp. 1969. 35*s*., i.e., £1.75)

The sociologist brings his distinctive tools to the study of religion, analysing it as a phenomenon developed by man in quest for social meaning and personal identity. While this approach is highly inadequate in its failure to take seriously enough the religious motivation over against social motivation and its implicit dismissal of the impact of the eternal dimension upon the human realm, it is not without value for the understanding of both society and religion. This book is an excellent example of the sociologist's approach to religion.

The book is in two parts. The first works out a sociological theory of religion within the broader framework of the sociology of knowledge. The examples used are drawn from both contemporary and ancient religions. From this analysis, Berger concludes: "religion appears in history both as a world-maintaining and as a world-shaking force ... an immense projection of human meanings into the empty vastness of the universe."

The second part develops the relationship of religion to history, from the sociological viewpoint, and with special reference to the phenomenon of secularization in the Western world and its religious origins in the Hebrew and Protestant world-views. This discussion is particularly fascinating, throwing much light on the interplay of religion and religion-derived humanism in the

development of secularized, "post-religious" society. Secularization originated in Israel, which broke free from the total cosmic system of Egypt-Mesopotamia, with its religion of Yahweh — radically transcendent, acting historically rather than cosmically, manifest in radical ethical demands, and immune to magical manipulation. Catholic Christianity re-mythologized the world with its pantheon of saints, but the Hebrew concept of history remained, always potentially revolutionary. Reformation and Renaissance led to Western man's "second disenchantment" with nature, a renewed emptying of the cosmos; Protestantism removed the sovereign deity so far away from man that a "historical space" was made which rationalist Enlightenment and atheist Marxism were to fill.

The concluding sociological and theological perspectives complete a very useful discussion of a difficult but significant theme.

BRIAN G. COOPER

South American Mythology. By HAROLD OSBORNE. (Mythology of the World's Peoples Series. The Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd., Feltham, Middlesex, 141 pp. 24 colour illustrations, over 100 black and white. 1968. 25*s*.)

The publication of this popular account of South American mythology just preceded Thor Heyerdahl's departure from Morocco for America in a craft made of two hundred thousand papyrus reeds bound together, an exact replica of Ancient Egyptian vessels, to give credence to his theory about how civilization came to the continent about three thousand years ago. Contemporary evidence is that the Americas were first peopled via the Bering Straits about twenty thousand years ago, after the last glacial period. This would account for the Mongoloid features of pre-Hispanic Americans, which suggest an Asian origin. By 5000 B.C. the immigrants had reached the extreme south, but in numbers so few and scattered that their cultures flourished separately. Whatever the origin of their rich mythologies — the subject of lively controversy as between theories of indigenous development and trans-oceanic influences — similarities with both ancient Egypt and India cannot be ignored.

In dealing with both Andean and Tropical Forest peoples, Harold Osborne, himself once resident amongst the Quechuas (descendants of the Incas) for several years, shows a particular interest in myths, legends, and folklore, and points out the difficulty in distinguishing between these types of tradition. His examination draws extensively from the Spanish chroniclers during and after the Conquest in the sixteenth century, from whose records many quotations are given, for lack of alternative pre-Columbian written sources.

Yet the testimony of the earlier ages may not be as barren as he suggests. Apart from the existence of "quipus," mnemonic devices of coloured strings tied in knots, which he mentions, there is evidence that the Mochica culture, which flourished along the northern Peruvian coast *c.* 300 B.C.–A.D. 500, had an esoteric script of ideograms engraved on lima beans. Only trained specialists could decipher them. Amongst the Incas and other tribes, there was a class of "wise men" whose function it was orally to keep alive religious and folklore traditions, just as *bhanakas* in India committed to memory the Buddha's teachings. Furthermore, Osborne has not judged it necessary to establish closer links between myths and archaeological findings, which could afford veridical confirmation in some cases.

Most of the tribes described practised animism and totemism, but in the more advanced cultures these practices were overlaid by veneration of cosmological deities. Readers who are alive to the ignorance and bias of the Spanish chroniclers will find in their ac-

counts many hints of sophisticated esoteric doctrines.

The book is beautifully illustrated, well printed, and very reasonably priced for a volume of this kind.

ELYANE M. HUNT

Mothers and Sons. By SARAT CHANDRA CHATTERJI. Translated by DILIP KUMAR ROY. (Pearl Publications, Bombay. 177 pp. 1968. Rs. 3.50)

The book consists of the two novelettes, originally in Bengali, namely, *Nishkriti* and *Ramer Sumati,* of Sarat Chandra Chatterji, who had, as Rabindranath Tagore said, "completely won the hearts of Bengali readers." Both "Deliverance" and "The Compliant Prodigal" (the English titles) deal with joint-family life in Bengal. The joint family has its strains and stresses, no doubt, but it has also the joys of intimate affectionate fellowship. The latter, generally speaking, stem from the spirit of generous understanding which characterizes at least one of the members of the family; in the present case, a sister-in-law. As Narayani, the heroine of "The Compliant Prodigal" — whose love wins over the prodigal, while to all others in the family and in the village he is "a holy terror" — says: "But the One Who presides within you — if you fail to cherish Him through a motherless child He gives in your keeping, then you can never know how to cherish any other" (p. 176). Indeed, true love is worked and tested only when it is tried by the spirit of contrariness in belief and in behaviour. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that "Deliverance" was first published singly over two decades ago. The translator is an acknowledged adept in the art of translation.

G. M.

Correspondence

A Letter from Stuttgart

Stuttgart, 1 August 1969

KIRCHENTAG is a biennial mass gathering of German Protestants to examine current issues of religion and the world with expertise and in the light of the Christian faith. It has had much influence within West Germany in the past twenty years; on a smaller scale, and with differing relevance within the Communist system, it has affected East Germany too. *Kirchentag* always reaches well beyond confessional boundaries: it is a pan-European, indeed a world, Christian gathering, for upwards of a thousand delegates and visitors from churches and countries across the globe usually attend, and the ecumenical perspective often includes contributions from those of other faiths, particularly Judaism and Islam.

Kirchentag 1969 was held in Stuttgart, its importance enhanced by its being the only major international Christian gathering anywhere in the world in this year. Its theme was "Hunger for Righteousness"; and the basic material for all its lectures, seminars, and occasions of worship, the Sermon on the Mount.

One of the major aspects of the theme was "Righteousness in a Revolutionary World," and Dr. Heider Dawar, an expert in development and economics from Afghanistan, provided an authentic voice from the Third World. Eschewing revolutionary slogans, he urged the need for patient, non-violent change

based on a real understanding of the needs of the peoples of the developing nations and their distinctive traditions. Economic development bought at the expense of the destruction of the essentials of a nation's cultural heritage is retrogression, not advance. The West must co-operate for development in peace and partnership. German speakers, including the Federal Minister for Overseas Aid, Dr. Erhard Eppler, insisted that "the attitude of the West to the developing nations will be the touchstone of our morality for the future," and asked of the Christian Church in the West that it "preach to the theme of one world, against prevailing nationalisms."

Resolutions passed included a demand for fewer new churches to be built in Germany, the money to go to development projects overseas, and a call to the West German government to allocate ten per cent of its military spending to that end also. The Churches in Germany are already beginning to take their responsibility towards the poor of the world more seriously: this year an extra two per cent levy on church finances was commenced, which will allocate at least a further £3,000,000 for overseas aid.

The hunger for justice in the Middle East, torn apart by the Arab-Israeli conflict, is an explosive subject. In most Western countries it is hard to get Arab and Israeli spokesmen to occupy a common platform, so wide is the gulf. It was accordingly both fitting and deeply significant that a Christian gathering in Germany, a country so tragically interwoven with the Jewish destiny, should have been able to bring Jewish and Arab speakers together around a common table in public to state their positions. Christian Europe has hardly yet admitted its responsibility for the current turmoil in the Middle East. Yet from the Crusades and medieval persecution of the Jews, to broken promises towards the Arabs and gas-chambers in Hitler's epoch, Europe has been deeply implicated. One would like to think that the example of concern manifested at the *Kirchentag* will be followed by churches elsewhere.

In a time of theological upheaval and much new questing, the Working Group on the nature of God naturally attracted much attention. Theologians from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and the learned Marxist philosopher, Professor Machovec of Prague, grappled with the issues of theism and atheism. Professor Luthi of Vienna stressed the importance for Christianity of its relationship to other great world religions: "the truth of a religion comes only in comparison with, and reaction to, the tenets of another religious system." Yet this could hardly apply to Christianity's encounter with atheism, for

> atheists have never come to grips with the reality of God, but have merely dealt with mathematical proofs *about* God. But there can be no final "proof" of God, and the reality of God cannot be grappled with through mathematics.

Professor Pannenburg of Munich analysed the relationship between human thought and the existence of God: God could not be understood without thought, for the latter was man's only means of systematizing reality; but God could never be completely comprehended: his finality always lay in the future. God is not only the God of the past and the now, but also the God "of the becoming, of the future." Professor Machovec, as a Marxist and philosophical atheist, expressed the view that for centuries mankind had talked about God without understanding that it was essentially talking about "its own infinity." The voice of conscience, and the advance of human knowledge and technological power, were, for the Marxist, aspects of this "infinity." Professor Machovec admitted that as material questions became secondary in economically successful Communist countries, Marxist thinkers were already having to devote more attention to man's consciousness and "religious" awareness.

Marxism had to be realistic and abandon utopianism: "Paradise on earth cannot be built by Marxism. But when we have solved all the problems of hunger and disease, then it will be possible for a better man to arise."

Kirchentag reflected many traditions within Christianity, and not only those within German Protestantism. Particularly notable was the contribution by Bishop Samuel, the Coptic-Orthodox bishop of Cairo. His sermon on the *Magnificat*, and his recitation and singing, to his own piano accompaniment, of the traditional Coptic liturgy, was memorable. One was transported back to some of the earliest traditions and origins of Christianity in the culture of the Middle East.

An unusual special feature of the Stuttgart *Kirchentag* was the exhibition of "The Sacred Art of West Africa" mounted at the city's Linden museum. A hundred and fifty masks, amulets, charms, and manifestations of animism and tribal deities from West Africa were on display, and were powerful reminders of early stages of man's religious pilgrimage.

Kirchentag concluded with a call by Professor Wolf Häfale, of Euratom's nuclear research centre at Karlsruhe, for the West to put all its technological skills and energy resources at the disposal of all mankind:

> The Gross National Product must be not only for ourselves, but for all our neighbours. Yet you can only live with such a hope when it is grounded in a hope in God. Righteousness as the Way to Life is the only rational path.

BRIAN G. COOPER

Ends and Sayings

" . . . ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."

—SAMUEL BUTLER: *Hudibras*

The landing of the American astronauts on the moon, 20 July 1969, and the findings of the space probe Mariner 6, in its flight past Mars, 30 July, have produced a crop of theories. The rock fragments and black dust brought from the moon have generated the theory that the moon has a glassy skin and a crust of earth-type rocks. The supposition is that it is hot inside and subject to volcanic action (Gerald Leach, in *The Observer*, 3 August 1969). The moon dust could have been produced by atmospheric erosion, except that the moon has no atmosphere. Other scientists have denied the idea of lunar volcanic activity, even in the past.

A paragraph in "Miscellany" (*The Guardian*, 5 August 1969) relates how scientists at the Central Electricity Research Laboratory, Leatherhead, Surrey, are finding that the moon dust's "picture" resembles "a humble substance ... all too familiar to those involved in power generation back down here on earth — pulverized fuel ash." Could we say "dead" matter? Ironically, two reviews appearing about the same time (*The Guardian*, 4 August 1969) present the threat of a "dead" environment and a destroyed atmosphere on an industrialized earth, even though the data refer only to Britain. John Barr's *Derelict Britain* (Pelican Books) points to the present 120,000 acres of "sour, rotting industrial dereliction" in Britain, with an estimated doubling of this figure by the end of the century, if reclamation lags. Terence Bendixson describes helpful schemes in use, and suggests further ways of expanding reclamation. H.M.S.O.'s *Report on Alkali*

etc. Works in Britain estimates roughly what industry pays for the control of air pollution. In 1968 it cost ten industrial groups £39,000,000, expenditure on control equipment during the past ten years being assessed at £150,000,000. Yet these attempts merely deal piecemeal with symptoms. It needs the global approach to the ancient concept of the earth as a total living entity, that is now slowly being adopted by some groups of scientists.

Conclusions about Mars are also uncertain. Though the planet is considered geologically dead, there are surprising warm spots on the surface, and water in the thin atmosphere (which is mainly carbon dioxide). Gases found are in the range of the spectrum associated with hydrocarbons, normally formed only by living organisms. There is thus a hint of possible life as we know it.

Scientists are occasionally disconcerted by finding that traditional lore is not superstition but shows a deeper grasp of natural laws. Constructions hitherto supposed primitive like Stonehenge, exhibit sophisticated skills and surprising astronomical knowledge. The ancients disguised their knowledge of science under religious symbolism, but it was science for all that. Their occultism called the moon-planet a corpse, and Mars a planet in obscuration (asleep). The moon has always had a wide-spread mass of myth and legend around it, both its benign and maleficent aspects; a sifting of the wheat from the chaff in this might well supplement and correct scientific observations.

There has been so much acceptance of a psychology that views man's motivations in terms of behaviourism that it is heartening to find researchers discovering that this approach is far from the truth. The obscure and extraordinary "ability to acquire and use language ... appears to be unique to man."

John Davy (*Observer Review,* 10 August 1969) writes about the man in the forefront of this exciting revolution of ideas — Noam Chomsky, Professor of Linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The human mind's mysterious power to learn language, to extract meaning from a sequence of words, is right outside the range of material or animal mechanisms. Experiments in teaching sign language to a chimpanzee have produced only a "vocabulary" without the ability to assemble sentences. Numerous attempts to design computers able to "understand" language, except very very crudely, have failed, as have all the highly expensive projects for translation computers. It is only the human being who has the power to synthesize, to recognize the underlying orderly structure in a sentence, even when the individual words make nonsense. He alone can perceive the same meaning in two sentences with different structures — "John ate the orange" and "The orange was eaten by John." He alone can grasp the different meanings in sentences with the same structure. "John is easy to please" (object), and "John is eager to please" (subject). The real language is the "deep structure" not the "surface structures." Present research seems to show that "at some level all languages share a common deep structure ... a 'universal grammar.'" The capacity of children to learn languages, so to say "from scratch," implies an innate "unconscious knowledge of the structure which underlies all languages."

Professor Chomsky modestly denies the novelty of these ideas. Descartes and his followers developed them and later philosophers forgot them. He claims that the complex organization of the mind is still "a total mystery," and doubts whether any known physical brain process can explain it. As John Davy puts it, "the ghost in the machine" banished by behaviouristic psychology is beginning to look very substantial and significant, even if still mysterious.

This is all very stimulating, and

perhaps one small contribution could be added — "... were it not for the germ of this power [clairvoyance] slightly active in every one, no man could convey to another any idea whatsoever" (W. Q. JUDGE: *The Ocean of Theosophy*). Can we hope that the long-ignored and often-derided concept of "the human-divine soul" will also return? We must understand what questions to ask about its nature and function as enlightener and transformer of mind and reason. We badly need to direct our gaze towards the horizons opening up, hitherto blanketed by the fog of preconceptions.

The tug-of-war between conflicting ideas about prison management is described by Giles Playfair in "Prison Security or Public Safety?" (*The Spectator,* 16 August 1969). Following a spectacular escape in 1966, recommendations by the Mountbatten report for strengthening prison security were accepted — classification of prisoners, a fortress-type prison for Category A, grading down to open prisons — at an estimated cost of £2,500,000.

A sub-committee of the House of Commons Estimate Committee; whose report was published in 1967, after a more lengthy enquiry, queried whether this expense was justified, especially when the scheme could retard more important rehabilitation. One should compare the true picture of escapes (368 listed during the previous five years, all but ten being recaptured) with the "failure" figures — those who serve their term and then commit further serious offences. Which is the greater risk?

The purpose of imprisonment should not be permanent "incapacitation," but rehabilitation, without which unreformed ex-prisoners are a constant threat to society. The implementation of the security recommendations has not helped "treatment and training," already handicapped by over-crowded and unsuitable buildings, despite various brave attempts to "create a therapeutic atmosphere." Outside working parties, hostel schemes, and open prisons have been affected and relations between prisoners and prison staff often worsened, though there are creatively progressive prisons "thanks both to Prison Department policy and to the work of various dedicated prison governors of the highest intelligence."

Mr. Playfair also queries both the justice of the very long sentences imposed for "retribution and deterrence" and the quantitative rather than qualitative category groupings. Though some irreclaimable, and often abnormal, criminals may have, for society's safety, to be isolated for life, their psychological needs demand different treatment; while others, administratively grouped with them, lose, for security reasons, the treatment and training essential for improvement. Some of the Mountbatten recommendations have, he states, been over-rigidly implemented, while others, like the prisoners' need for family contacts, have been ignored.

The same difficulty comes up in all social problems — the ignoring of human and spiritual values — a difficulty aggravated by our admass and megalopolitan civilization. It needs to be broken down into smaller, more viable, responsible units, with thereby greater opportunities for creative, self-energized (but not selfish) work.